



Isle of Wight Pension Fund Audit planning report

Year ended 31 March 2022

July 2022

1 July 2022



Isle of Wight Council
County Hall
High Street
Newport, Isle of Wight
PO30 1UD

Dear Audit Committee Members

Outline audit planning report

We are pleased to attach our Outline Audit Plan which sets out how we intend to carry out our responsibilities as auditor. The purpose of this report is to provide you with a basis to review our approach and scope for the 2021/22 audit, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the National Audit Office's 2020 Code of Audit Practice, the auditing standards and other professional requirements. It also aims to ensure that our audit is aligned with the Committee's service expectations. We have not yet completed our detailed planning procedures but any changes in our risk assessment will be communicated to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

This plan summarises our initial assessment of the key risks driving the development of an effective audit for the Pension Fund, and outlines our planned audit strategy in response to those risks.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Audit Committee and management, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this report with you on 25 July 2022 as well as understand whether there are other matters which you consider may influence our audit.

Yours faithfully

Helen Thompson
For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP
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Contents



Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) issued the "Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies". It is available from the PSAA website (<https://www.psa.co.uk/managing-audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies/>). The Statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between appointed auditors and audited bodies. It summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies begin and end, and what is to be expected of the audited body in certain areas.

The "Terms of Appointment and further guidance (updated July 2021)" issued by the PSAA (<https://www.psa.co.uk/managing-audit-quality/terms-of-appointment/terms-of-appointment-and-further-guidance-1-july-2021/>) sets out additional requirements that auditors must comply with, over and above those set out in the National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and in legislation, and covers matters of practice and procedure which are of a recurring nature.

This report is made solely to the Audit Committee and management of Isle of Wight Pension Fund in accordance with the statement of responsibilities. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Audit Committee and management of Isle of Wight Pension Fund those matters we are required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Audit Committee and management of Isle of Wight Pension Fund for this report or for the opinions we have formed. It should not be provided to any third-party without our prior written consent.



01

Overview of our 2021/22 audit strategy



Overview of our 2021/22 audit strategy

The following 'dashboard' summarises the significant accounting and auditing matters outlined in this report. It seeks to provide the Audit Committee with an overview of our initial risk identification for the upcoming audit and any changes in risks identified in the current year.

Audit risks and areas of focus

Risk / area of focus	Risk identified	Change from PY	Details
Misstatements due to fraud or error	Fraud risk	No change in risk of focus	As identified in ISA 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that would otherwise appear to be operating effectively. In addition to our overall response, we consider where these risks may manifest themselves and identify separate fraud risks as necessary below.
Risk of manipulation of investment valuation and income	Fraud risk	No change in risk of focus	Under ISA240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to improper recognition of revenue. In the public sector, this requirement is modified by Practice Note 10, issued by the Financial Reporting Council, which states that auditors should also consider the risk that material misstatements may occur by the manipulation of expenditure recognition. Our judgement is the significant risk at the Pension Fund relates to the manipulation of investment valuation and income.
Valuation of private debt (Level 3 Fair Value hierarchy)	Significant risk	No change in risk of focus	Investments at Level 3 are those where at least one input that could have a significant effect on the asset's valuation is not based on observable market data. Significant judgements are made by the investment managers or administrators to value these investments whose prices are not publically available. Market volatility means such judgments can quickly become outdated, especially when there is a significant time period between the latest available audited information and the fund year end. Such variations could have a material impact on the financial statements.
Going Concern: Compliance with ISA 570	Area of focus	No change in risk of focus	There is a presumption that the Fund will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future. However, the Fund is required to carry out a going concern assessment that is proportionate to the risks it faces. In light of the continued impact of Covid-19 throughout 2021/22, there is a need for the Fund to ensure it's going concern assessment, including its supporting cashflow forecast, is thorough and appropriately comprehensive. The Fund is then required to ensure that its going concern disclosure within the statement of accounts adequately reflects its going concern assessment, and in particular highlights any material uncertainties it has identified.

Overview of our 2021/22 audit strategy

Materiality

Materiality has been set at £6.91m, which represents 1% of the Fund's prior year net assets.

Planning
materiality

£6.91m

Performance
materiality

£5.2m

Audit
differences

£0.35m

Performance materiality has been set at £5.2m, which represents 75% of materiality.

We will report all uncorrected misstatements relating to the Net Assets Statement and Pension Fund Account greater than £0.35m. Other misstatements identified will be communicated to the extent that they merit the attention of the Audit Committee.

Overview of our 2021/22 audit strategy

Audit scope

This Audit Plan covers the work that we plan to perform to provide you with:

- Our audit opinion on whether the financial statements of Isle of Wight Pension Fund give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31 March 2022 and of the income and expenditure for the year then ended.

Our audit will also include the mandatory procedures that we are required to perform in accordance with applicable laws and auditing standards.

When planning the audit we take into account several key inputs:

- Strategic, operational and financial risks relevant to the financial statements;
- Developments in financial reporting and auditing standards;
- The quality of systems and processes;
- Changes in the business and regulatory environment; and,
- Management's views on all of the above.

By considering these inputs, our audit is focused on the areas that matter and our feedback is more likely to be relevant to the Pension Fund.

Taking the above into account, and as articulated in this outline audit plan, our professional responsibilities require us to independently assess the risks associated with providing an audit opinion and undertake appropriate procedures in response to that. Our Terms of Appointment with PSAA allow them to vary the fee dependent on "the auditors assessment of risk and the work needed to meet their professional responsibilities". PSAA are aware that the setting of scale fees has not kept pace with the changing requirements of external audit with increased focus on, for example, the valuations of complex investments, the valuation of pension obligations, and the introduction of new accounting standards. Therefore to the extent any of these or any other risks are relevant in the context of Isle of Wight Pension Fund's audit, we will discuss these with management as to the impact on the scale fee.

Timeline

In April 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government established regulations to extend the target date for publishing audited local authority accounts from 31 July to 30 September, for a period of two years (i.e. covering the audit of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounting years).

In December 2021, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced proposals to extend the deadline for the publication of audited accounts to 30 November for 2021/22.

As reflected in our timeline in section 6 of this report, we are unable to meet the 30 November publication date due to resourcing constraints. The Fund has reported to the Local Government Association that it will be in breach of the requirement to publish its annual report and accounts by 1 December. The Fund has recorded this on their breaches log, reported to both committee and board, and have determined this is not materially significant to report to the Pensions Regulator.



02 Audit risks



Our response to significant risks

We have set out the significant risks (including fraud risks denoted by*) identified for the current year audit along with the rationale and expected audit approach. The risks identified below may change to reflect any significant findings or subsequent issues we identify during the audit.

<p>Misstatements due to fraud or error*</p>	<p>What is the risk?</p> <p>As identified in ISA 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that would otherwise appear to be operating effectively.</p>	<p>What will we do?</p> <p>We will undertake our standard procedures to address fraud risk, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inquiry of management about risks of fraud and the controls put in place to address those risks.• Understanding the oversight given by those charged with governance of management's processes over fraud.• Consideration of the effectiveness of management's controls designed to address the risk of fraud. <p>Performing mandatory procedures regardless of specifically identified fraud risks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Testing the appropriateness of journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements.• Assessing accounting estimates for evidence of management bias.• Evaluating the business rationale for significant unusual transactions. <p>In addition to our overall response, we consider where these risk may manifest themselves and identify separate fraud risks as necessary below.</p>
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Our response to significant risks (continued)

Risk of manipulation of investment valuation and investment income *

Financial statement impact

Manipulation of investment valuation and investment income would increase the net value of pension fund assets, and increase the investment income recognised in year.

Total net assets of the Fund for 2020/21:
£690,697k

Total investment income of the Fund in 2020/21:
£19,112k

What is the risk?

Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to improper revenue recognition. In the public sector, this requirement is modified by Practice Note 10 issued by the Financial Reporting Council, which states that auditors should also consider the risk that material misstatements may occur by the manipulation of expenditure recognition.

From our risk assessment, we have assessed that the risk manifests itself through the manipulation of investment valuation and investment income.

What will we do?

Our approach will focus on:

- ▶ For significant investments we will reconcile the investment value to both the fund manager and custodian reports. Where appropriate or necessary we will examine the underlying support for the investment value (i.e. quoted market price)
- ▶ Journal testing – we will use our testing of journals to identify high risk transactions, such as items posted to investment income outside the normal monthly process.

Our response to significant risks

Valuation of complex Investments (Level 3 Fair Value hierarchy)

Financial statement impact

As at 31 March 2022, Isle of Wight Pension Fund has invested \$31 million (£23.6 million) in private debt and €9.4 million (£7.7 million) in infrastructure.

These investments are new for 2020/21 following the change in investment strategy and more complex to value.

What is the risk?

Investments at Level 3 are those where at least one input that could have a significant effect on the asset's valuation is not based on observable market data.

Significant judgements are made by the Investment Managers or administrators to value these investments whose prices are not publically available. The material nature of Investments means that any error in judgement could result in a material valuation error.

Market volatility means such judgments can quickly become outdated, especially when there is a significant time period between the latest available audited information and the fund year end. Such variations could have a material impact on the financial statements.

What will we do?

Our approach will focus on:

- Reviewing the latest available audited accounts for the relevant funds and ensuring there are no matters arising that highlight weaknesses in the fund's valuation.
- Where the latest audited accounts are not as at 31 March 2022, performing analytical procedures and checking the valuation output for reasonableness against our own expectations.
- Testing accounting entries have been correctly processed in the financial statements.
- Reviewing the disclosures in the financial statements are compliant with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

If necessary, our internal valuation specialists will support our work in this area.

Audit risks

Other areas of audit focus

What is the risk/area of focus?

Going Concern: Compliance with ISA 570

There is a presumption that the Fund will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future. However, the Fund is required to carry out a going concern assessment that is proportionate to the risks it faces. There is a need for the Fund to ensure its going concern assessment, including its cashflow forecast, is thorough and appropriately comprehensive.

The Fund is required to ensure that its going concern disclosure within the statement of accounts adequately reflects its going concern assessment and in particular highlights any uncertainties it has identified.

What will we do?

We will:

- Challenge management's identification of events or conditions impacting going concern.
- Test management's resulting assessment of going concern by evaluating supporting evidence (including consideration of the risk of management bias).
- Review the Fund's cashflow forecast covering the foreseeable future, to ensure that it has sufficient liquidity to continue to operate as a going concern.
- Undertake a 'stand back' review to consider all of the evidence obtained, whether corroborative or contradictory, when we draw our conclusions on going concern.
- Challenge the disclosure made in the accounts in respect of going concern and any material uncertainties.



03

Audit materiality



Materiality

Materiality

For planning purposes, materiality for 2021/22 has been set at £6.91m. This represents 1% of the Pension Fund's prior year net assets. It will be reassessed throughout the audit process. This basis is consistent with 2020/21. For Isle of Wight Pension Fund, the Net Asset Statement, which discloses the value of the investments held by the scheme, is the most appropriate measure rather than the Fund Account. Assets are key, as they cover the liabilities of the fund and generate significant income. Use of net assets as the measure of materiality is EY standard practice for pension funds



We request that the Audit Committee confirm its understanding of, and agreement to, these materiality and reporting levels.

Key definitions

Planning materiality – the amount over which we anticipate misstatements would influence the economic decisions of a user of the financial statements.

Performance materiality – the amount we use to determine the extent of our audit procedures. We have set performance materiality at £5.2m which represents 75% of planning materiality. We apply 75% when it is not an initial audit and we have a sound understanding of the entity and past experience with the engagement indicates that a higher risk of misstatement is unlikely.

Audit difference threshold – we propose that misstatements identified below this threshold are deemed clearly trivial. We will report to you all uncorrected misstatements over this amount relating to the fund account and the net assets statement that have an effect on returns or that relate to expenditure.

Other uncorrected misstatements, such as reclassifications and misstatements in statements or disclosures, and corrected misstatements will be communicated to the extent that they merit the attention of the Audit Committee, or are important from a qualitative perspective.



04

Scope of our audit



Our Audit Process and Strategy

Objective and Scope of our Audit scoping

Under the Code of Audit Practice our principal objectives are to review and report on the Pension Fund's financial statements:

1. Financial statement audit

Our objective is:

- To form an opinion on the financial statements under International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).
- To form an opinion on the consistency of the pension fund financial statements within the pension fund annual report with the published financial statements of Isle of Wight Council.

We also perform other procedures as required by auditing, ethical and independence standards, the Code and other regulations. We outline below the procedures we will undertake during the course of our audit.

Procedures required by standards

- Addressing the risk of fraud and error;
- Significant disclosures included in the financial statements;
- Entity-wide controls;
- Reading other information contained in the financial statements and reporting whether it is inconsistent with our understanding and the financial statements; and
- Auditor independence.

Our Audit Process and Strategy (continued)

Audit Process Overview

Our audit involves:

- Identifying and understanding the key processes and internal controls; and
- Substantive tests of detail of transactions and amounts.

For 2021/22 we plan to follow a substantive approach to the audit as we have concluded this is the most efficient way to obtain the level of audit assurance required to conclude that the financial statements are not materially misstated.

Analytics:

We will use our computer-based analytics tools to enable us to capture whole populations of your financial data, in particular journal entries. These tools:

- Help identify specific exceptions and anomalies which can then be subject to more traditional substantive audit tests; and
- Give greater likelihood of identifying errors than random sampling techniques.

We will report the findings from our process and analytics work, including any significant weaknesses or inefficiencies identified and recommendations for improvement, to management and the Audit Committee.

Internal audit:

We will regularly meet with the Chief Internal Auditor, and review internal audit plans and the results of their work. We will reflect the findings from these reports, together with reports from any other work completed in the year, in our detailed audit work, where they raise issues that could have an impact on the financial statements.



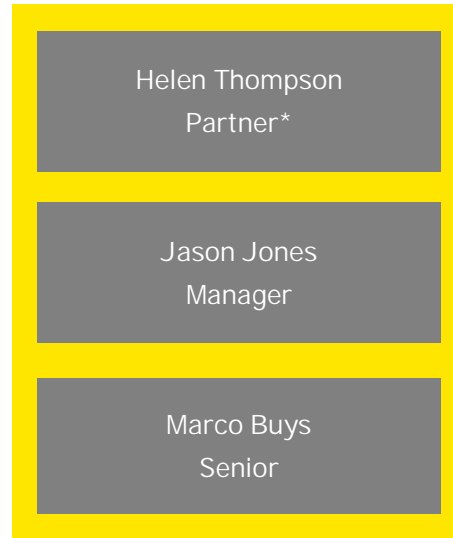
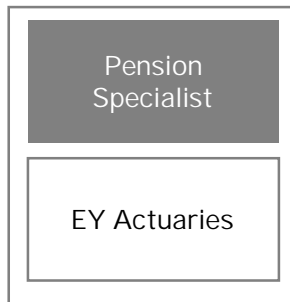
05

Audit team



Audit team

Audit team structure:



Working together with the Pension Fund

We are working together with officers to identify continuing improvements in communication and processes for the 2021/22 audit.

We will continue to keep our audit approach under review to streamline it where possible.

* Key Audit Partner

Audit team changes

Key changes to our team.



Jason Jones, Engagement Manager

- Jason takes over from Jack Dunkley as the Engagement Manager.
- Jason has significant public sector audit experience of over 10 years, with a portfolio of Health Sector bodies, Local Authorities and Local Government Pension Fund audits and is also the engagement manager for Isle of Wight Council.

Use of specialists

When auditing key judgements, we are often required to rely on the input and advice provided by specialists who have qualifications and expertise not possessed by the core audit team. The area where either EY or third party specialists provide input for the current year audit is:

Area	Specialists
Pensions Valuation	Hymans Robertson (management specialist), EY Actuaries (auditor specialist)

In accordance with Auditing Standards, we will evaluate each specialist's professional competence and objectivity, considering their qualifications, experience and available resources, together with the independence of the individuals performing the work.

We also consider the work performed by the specialist in light of our knowledge of the Pension Fund's business and processes and our assessment of audit risk in the particular area. For example, we would typically perform the following procedures:

- Analyse source data and make inquiries as to the procedures used by the specialist to establish whether the source data is relevant and reliable;
- Assess the reasonableness of the assumptions and methods used;
- Consider the appropriateness of the timing of when the specialist carried out the work; and
- Assess whether the substance of the specialist's findings are properly reflected in the financial statements.

Developing the right Audit Culture

In July 2021, EY established a UK Audit Board (UKAB) with a majority of independent Audit Non-Executives (ANEs). The UKAB will support our focus on delivering high-quality audits by strengthening governance and oversight over the culture of the audit business. This focus is critical given that audit quality starts with having the right culture embedded in the business.

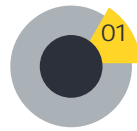


Our audit culture is the cement that binds together the building blocks and foundation of our audit strategy. We have been thoughtful in articulating a culture that is right for us: one that recognises we are part of a wider, global firm and is clear about whose interests our audits serve.

There are three elements underpinning our culture:

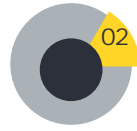
1. Our people are focused on a common purpose. It is vital we foster and nurture the values, attitudes and behaviours that lead our people to do the right thing.
2. The essential attributes of our audit business are:
 - Right resources – We team with competent people, investing in audit technology, methodology and support
 - Right first time – Our teams execute and review their work, consulting where required to meet the required standard
 - Right reward – We align our reward and recognition to reinforce the right behaviours

3. The six pillars of Sustainable Audit Quality are implemented.



Tone at the top

The internal and external messages sent by EY leadership, including audit partners, set a clear tone at the top - they establish and encourage a commitment to audit quality



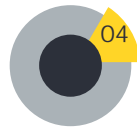
Exceptional talent

Specific initiatives support EY auditors in devoting time to perform quality work, including recruitment, retention, development and workload management



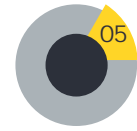
Accountability

The systems and processes in place help EY people take responsibility for carrying out high-quality work at all times, including their reward and recognition



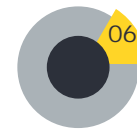
Audit technology and digital

The EY Digital Audit is evolving to set the standard for the digital-first way of approaching audit, combining leading-edge digital tools, stakeholder focus and a commitment to quality



Simplification and innovation

We are simplifying and standardising the approach used by EY auditors and embracing emerging technologies to improve the quality, consistency and efficiency of the audit



Enablement and quality support

How EY teams are internally supported to manage their responsibility to provide high audit quality

A critical part of this culture is that our people are encouraged and empowered to challenge and exercise professional scepticism across all our audits. However, we recognise that creating a culture requires more than just words from leaders. It has to be reflected in the lived experience of all our people each and every day enabling them to challenge themselves and the companies we audit.

Each year we complete an audit quality culture assessment to obtain feedback from our people on the values and behaviours they experience, and those they consider to be fundamental to our audit quality culture of the future. We action points that arise to ensure our culture continues to evolve appropriately.

2021 Audit Culture Survey result

A cultural health score of 78% (73%) was achieved for our UK Audit Business

We bring our culture alive by investing in three priority workstreams:

- Audit Culture with a focus on professional scepticism
- Adopting the digital audit
- Standardisation

This investment has led to a number of successful outputs covering training, tools, techniques and additional sources. Specific highlights include:

- Audit Purpose Barometer
- Active Scepticism Framework
- Increased access to external sector forecasts
- Forensic risk assessment pilots
- Refreshed PLOT training and support materials, including embedding in new hire and trainee courses
- Digital audit training for all ranks
- Increased hot file reviews and improved escalation processes
- New work programmes issued on auditing going concern, climate, impairment, expected credit losses, cashflow statements and conducting effective group oversight
- Development of bite size, available on demand, task specific tutorial videos

“A series of company collapses linked to unhealthy cultures.....have demonstrated why cultivating a healthy culture, underpinned by the right tone from the top, is fundamental to business success.”

Sir John Thompson
Chief Executive of the FRC



06

Audit timeline





Audit timeline

Timetable of communication and deliverables

Timeline

Below is a timetable showing the key stages of the audit and the deliverables we have agreed to provide to you through the audit cycle in 2021/22. The final timetable will depend on our ability to obtain sufficient, appropriate audit evidence to support our audit opinion

From time to time matters may arise that require immediate communication with the Audit Committee and we will discuss them with the Audit Committee Chair as appropriate. We will also provide updates on corporate governance and regulatory matters as necessary.

Audit phase	Timetable	Audit committee timetable	Deliverables
	June/July	Audit Committee	Outline Audit Plan
	August		
	September	Audit Committee	Audit Plan update (if required)
Planning:	October		
Risk assessment and setting of scopes. Walkthrough of key systems and processes	November		
Year end audit Audit Completion procedures	November/December	Audit Committee	Audit progress update
Year end audit Audit Completion procedures	January/February		
	March	Audit Committee	Audit Results Report Audit opinions and completion certificates



07

Independence





Introduction

The FRC Ethical Standard and ISA (UK) 260 “Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance”, requires us to communicate with you on a timely basis on all significant facts and matters that bear upon our integrity, objectivity and independence. The Ethical Standard, as revised in December 2019, requires that we communicate formally both at the planning stage and at the conclusion of the audit, as well as during the course of the audit if appropriate. The aim of these communications is to ensure full and fair disclosure by us to those charged with your governance on matters in which you have an interest.

Required communications

Planning stage	Final stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The principal threats, if any, to objectivity and independence identified by Ernst & Young (EY) including consideration of all relationships between you, your affiliates and directors and us; ▶ The safeguards adopted and the reasons why they are considered to be effective, including any Engagement Quality review; ▶ The overall assessment of threats and safeguards; ▶ Information about the general policies and process within EY to maintain objectivity and independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In order for you to assess the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm and each covered person, we are required to provide a written disclosure of relationships (including the provision of non-audit services) that may bear on our integrity, objectivity and independence. This is required to have regard to relationships with the entity, its directors and senior management, its affiliates, and its connected parties and the threats to integrity or objectivity, including those that could compromise independence that these create. We are also required to disclose any safeguards that we have put in place and why they address such threats, together with any other information necessary to enable our objectivity and independence to be assessed; ▶ Details of non-audit/additional services provided and the fees charged in relation thereto; ▶ Written confirmation that the firm and each covered person is independent and, if applicable, that any non-EY firms used in the group audit or external experts used have confirmed their independence to us; ▶ Details of any non-audit/additional services to a UK PIE audit client where there are differences of professional opinion concerning the engagement between the Ethics Partner and Engagement Partner and where the final conclusion differs from the professional opinion of the Ethics Partner ▶ Details of any inconsistencies between FRC Ethical Standard and your policy for the supply of non-audit services by EY and any apparent breach of that policy; ▶ Details of all breaches of the IESBA Code of Ethics, the FRC Ethical Standard and professional standards, and of any safeguards applied and actions taken by EY to address any threats to independence; and ▶ An opportunity to discuss auditor independence issues.

In addition, during the course of the audit, we are required to communicate with you whenever any significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place, for example, when accepting an engagement to provide non-audit services.

We ensure that the total amount of fees that EY and our network firms have charged to you and your affiliates for the provision of services during the reporting period, analysed in appropriate categories, are disclosed.

Relationships, services and related threats and safeguards

We highlight the following significant facts and matters that may be reasonably considered to bear upon our objectivity and independence, including the principal threats, if any. We have adopted the safeguards noted below to mitigate these threats along with the reasons why they are considered to be effective. However we will only perform non-audit services if the service has been pre-approved in accordance with your policy.

Overall Assessment

Overall, we consider that the safeguards that have been adopted appropriately mitigate the principal threats identified and we therefore confirm that EY is independent and the objectivity and independence of Helen Thompson, your audit engagement partner and the audit engagement team have not been compromised.

Self interest threats

A self interest threat arises when EY has financial or other interests in the Pension Fund. Examples include where we have an investment in the Pension Fund; where we receive significant fees in respect of non-audit services; where we need to recover long outstanding fees; or where we enter into a business relationship with you. At the time of writing, there are no long outstanding fees.

We believe that it is appropriate for us to undertake those permitted non-audit/additional services set out in Section 5.40 of the FRC Ethical Standard 2019 (FRC ES), and we will comply with the policies that you have approved.

When the ratio of non-audit fees to audit fees exceeds 1:1, we are required to discuss this with our Ethics Partner, as set out by the FRC ES, and if necessary agree additional safeguards or not accept the non-audit engagement. We will also discuss this with you.

A self interest threat may also arise if members of our audit engagement team have objectives or are rewarded in relation to sales of non-audit services to you. We confirm that no member of our audit engagement team, including those from other service lines, has objectives or is rewarded in relation to sales to you, in compliance with Ethical Standard part 4.

There are no other self interest threats at the date of this report.

Self review threats

Self review threats arise when the results of a non-audit service performed by EY or others within the EY network are reflected in the amounts included or disclosed in the financial statements.

There are no self review threats at the date of this report.

Management threats

Partners and employees of EY are prohibited from taking decisions on behalf of management of the Pension Fund. Management threats may also arise during the provision of a non-audit service in relation to which management is required to make judgements or decision based on that work.

There are no management threats at the date of this report.

Relationships, services and related threats and safeguards

Other threats

Other threats, such as advocacy, familiarity or intimidation, may arise.

There are no other threats at the date of this report.

EY Transparency Report 2021

Ernst & Young (EY) has policies and procedures that instil professional values as part of firm culture and ensure that the highest standards of objectivity, independence and integrity are maintained. Details of the key policies and processes in place within EY for maintaining objectivity and independence can be found in our annual Transparency Report which the firm is required to publish by law. The most recent version of this Report is for the year end 30 June 2021:

https://www.ey.com/en_uk/about-us/transparency-report-2021



08

Appendices



Appendix A

Fees

The duty to prescribe fees is a statutory function delegated to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

This is defined as the fee required by auditors to meet statutory responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice and supporting guidance published by the National Audit Office, the financial reporting requirements set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting published by CIPFA/LASAAC, and the professional standards applicable to auditors' work.

	Planned fee 2021/22	Scale fee 2021/22	Final Fee 2020/21
	£	£	£
PSAA Scale Fee	16,235	16,235	16,235
2020/21 fee variation determined by PSAA (Note 1)	-	-	18,275
Valuation of Level 3 investments (2)	4,000 – 5,000	N/A	-
PSAA pre-approved additional fee for ISA540 (3)	1,900	N/A	-
<i>Scale fee plus in-year variations</i>	<i>22,135 – 23,125</i>	<i>16,235</i>	<i>34,510</i>
Scale fee rebasing (1) (4)	40,956	40,956	-
Total fees	63,091	57,191	34,510

All fees exclude VAT

Notes:

See over page

In addition, we are driving greater innovation in the audit through the use of technology. The significant investment costs in this global technology continue to rise as we seek to provide enhanced assurance and insight in the audit.

The agreed fee presented is based on the following assumptions:

- ▶ Officers meeting the agreed timetable of deliverables;
- ▶ The production of materially accurate draft accounts
- ▶ Our accounts opinion being unqualified;
- ▶ Appropriate quality of documentation is provided by the Pension Fund; and
- ▶ The Pension Fund has an effective control environment.

The outline timetable on page 23 is contingent on the above factors

If any of the above assumptions prove to be unfounded, we will seek a variation to the agreed fee. This will be discussed with the Council in advance.

Fees for the auditor's consideration of correspondence from the public and formal objections will be charged in addition to the scale fee.

 Appendix A

Notes to fee table

(1) In order to meet regulatory and compliance audit requirements not present in the market at the time of our most recent bid to PSAA, we assessed that the recurrent cost of additional requirements to carry out our audit should increase by £40,956. We also submitted an in-year fee variation of £5,869. PSAA has determined the total fee variation across both elements for 2020/21 as £18,275. We expect similar costs in nature in 2021/22 and subsequent years. However, PSAA has stated that this will need to be determined each year, see (4) below.

(2) As detailed in the body of the report the pension fund has made a new investments in private debt and infrastructure. Above is our initial estimate of the additional cost to the audit in reviewing these investments.

(3) PSAA communicated a range of fees in August 2021 for the revised International Standard of Auditing 540 on Estimates. In the absence of further information, we have rolled this forward for 2021/22.




(4) We remain in discussion with PSAA about increasing the 2021/22 scale fee to reflect the additional work auditors are required to do to meet regulatory requirements. This was previously communicated in 2019/20, and in our 2020/21 Auditors Annual Report for the Council.

Appendix B

Required communications with the Audit Committee





We have detailed the communications that we must provide to the Audit Committee.

Our Reporting to you

Required communications	 What is reported?	  When and where
Terms of engagement	Confirmation by the Audit Committee of acceptance of terms of engagement as written in the engagement letter signed by both parties.	The statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies.
Our responsibilities	Reminder of our responsibilities as set out in the engagement letter	The statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies.
Planning and audit approach	Communication of the planned scope and timing of the audit, any limitations and the significant risks identified.	Audit planning report – July 2022
Significant findings from the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures • Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit • Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management • Written representations that we are seeking • Expected modifications to the audit report • Other matters if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process 	Audit results report – March 2023 Auditor's Annual Report – March 2023




Appendix B

Required communications with the Audit Committee (continued)

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	  When and where
Going concern	Events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty • Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements • The adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements 	Audit results report – March 2023
Misstatements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion, unless prohibited by law or regulation • The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods • A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected • Material misstatements corrected by management 	Audit results report – March 2023
Subsequent events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries of the audit committee where appropriate regarding whether any subsequent events have occurred that might affect the financial statements 	Audit results report – March 2023
Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries of the Audit Committee to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity • Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that a fraud may exist • Unless all of those charged with governance are involved in managing the entity, any identified or suspected fraud involving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management; b. Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or c. Others where the fraud results in a material misstatement in the financial statements • The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures necessary to complete the audit when fraud involving management is suspected • Any other matters related to fraud, relevant to Audit Committee responsibility 	Audit results report – March 2023





Appendix B

Required communications with the Audit Committee (continued)

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	 When and where
Related parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity's related parties including, when applicable: • Non-disclosure by management • Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions • Disagreement over disclosures • Non-compliance with laws and regulations • Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity 	Audit results report – March 2023
Independence	<p>Communication of all significant facts and matters that bear on EY's, and all individuals involved in the audit, objectivity and independence</p> <p>Communication of key elements of the audit engagement partner's consideration of independence and objectivity such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal threats • Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness • An overall assessment of threats and safeguards • Information about the general policies and process within the firm to maintain objectivity and independence <p>Communication whenever significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place.</p>	Audit Planning Report July 2022 and Audit results report – March 2023

Appendix B

Required communications with the Audit Committee (continued)

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	  When and where
External confirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management's refusal for us to request confirmations • Inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures 	Audit results report – March 2023
Consideration of laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to compliance with applicable regulations, matters involving identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, other than those which are clearly inconsequential and the implications thereof. Instances of suspected non-compliance may also include those that are brought to our attention that are expected to occur imminently or for which there is reason to believe that they may occur • Enquiry of the Audit Committee into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that the Audit Committee may be aware of 	Audit results report – March 2023
Internal controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit 	Audit results report – March 2023
Representations	Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance	Audit results report – March 2023
Material inconsistencies and misstatements	Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise	Audit results report – March 2023
Auditors report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any circumstances identified that affect the form and content of our auditor's report 	Audit results report – March 2023 Auditor's Annual Report – March 2023
Fee Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown of fee information when the audit plan is agreed • Breakdown of fee information at the completion of the audit • Any non-audit work 	Audit Planning Report July 2022 and Audit Results Report March 2023

Additional audit information

Objective of our audit

Our objective is to form an opinion on the Pension Fund's financial statements under International Standards on Auditing (UK) as prepared by you in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the EU, and as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

Our responsibilities in relation to the financial statement audit are set out in the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies. We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of the Audit Committee. The audit does not relieve management or the Audit Committee of their responsibilities.

Other required procedures during the course of the audit

In addition to the key areas of audit focus outlined in section 2, we have to perform other procedures as required by auditing, ethical and independence standards and other regulations. We outline the procedures below that we will undertake during the course of our audit.

Our responsibilities required by auditing standards

- Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.
- Obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Pension Fund's internal control.
- Evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting.
- Evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtaining sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Pension Fund to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. Reading other information contained in the financial statements, the Audit Committee reporting appropriately addresses matters communicated by us to the Audit Committee and reporting whether it is materially inconsistent with our understanding and the financial statements; and
- Maintaining auditor independence.

Additional audit information (continued)

Other required procedures during the course of the audit (continued)

Procedures required by the Audit Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing, and reporting on as appropriate, other information published with the financial statements, including the Annual Governance Statement. • Examining and reporting on the consistency of consolidation schedules or returns with the Pension Fund’s audited financial statements for the relevant reporting period
Other procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are required to discharge our statutory duties and responsibilities as established by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Code of Audit Practice

We have included in Appendix B a list of matters that we are required to communicate to you under professional standards.

Purpose and evaluation of materiality

For the purposes of determining whether the accounts are free from material error, we define materiality as the magnitude of an omission or misstatement that, individually or in the aggregate, in light of the surrounding circumstances, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of the users of the financial statements. Our evaluation of it requires professional judgement and necessarily takes into account qualitative as well as quantitative considerations implicit in the definition. We would be happy to discuss with you your expectations regarding our detection of misstatements in the financial statements.

Materiality determines the level of work performed on individual account balances and financial statement disclosures.

The amount we consider material at the end of the audit may differ from our initial determination. At this stage, however, it is not feasible to anticipate all of the circumstances that may ultimately influence our judgement about materiality. At the end of the audit we will form our final opinion by reference to all matters that could be significant to users of the accounts, including the total effect of the audit misstatements we identify, and our evaluation of materiality at that date.

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