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# External Audit Plan 2013/14

Telford and Wrekin Council

January 2014



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This report is addressed to the Authority and has been prepared for the sole use of the Authority. We take no responsibility to any member of staff acting in their individual capacities, or to third parties. The Audit Commission has issued a document entitled *Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies*. This summarises where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from the audited body. We draw your attention to this document which is available on the Audit Commission's website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk).

External auditors do not act as a substitute for the audited body's own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

If you have any concerns or are dissatisfied with any part of KPMG's work, in the first instance you should contact Ian Pennington, the appointed engagement lead to the Authority, who will try to resolve your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with your response please contact Trevor Rees on 0161 246 4000, or by email to [trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk](mailto:trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk), who is the national contact partner for all of KPMG's work with the Audit Commission. After this, if you are still dissatisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can access the Audit Commission's complaints procedure. Put your complaint in writing to the Complaints Unit Manager, Audit Commission, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF or by email to [complaints@audit-commission.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@audit-commission.gsi.gov.uk). Their telephone number is 0303 444 8330.

This document describes how we will deliver our audit work for Telford and Wrekin Council.

### Scope of this report

This document supplements our *Audit Fee Letter 2013/14* presented to you in June 2013. It describes how we will deliver our financial statements audit work for Telford and Wrekin Council ('the Authority'). It also sets out our approach to value for money (VFM) work for 2013/14.

We are required to satisfy ourselves that your accounts comply with statutory requirements and that proper practices have been observed in compiling them. We use a risk based audit approach.

The audit planning process and risk assessment is an on-going process and the assessment and fees in this plan will be kept under review and updated if necessary.

### Statutory responsibilities

Our statutory responsibilities and powers are set out in the *Audit Commission Act 1998* and the Audit Commission's *Code of Audit Practice*.

The *Code of Audit Practice* summarises our responsibilities into two objectives, requiring us to review and report on your:

- *financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement)*: providing an opinion on your accounts; and
- *use of resources*: concluding on the arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources (the value for money conclusion).

The Audit Commission's *Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies* sets out the respective responsibilities of the auditor and the Authority.

### Structure of this report

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 includes our headline messages, including any key risks identified this year for the financial statements and Value for Money audit.
- Section 3 describes the approach we take for the audit of the financial statements.
- Section 4 provides further detail on the financial statements audit risks.
- Section 5 explains our approach to VFM work and sets out our initial risk assessment for the VFM conclusion.

### Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank officers and Members for their continuing help and co-operation throughout our audit work.

This table summarises the headline messages. The remainder of this report provides further details on each area.

<b>Audit approach</b>	<p>Our overall audit approach is unchanged from last year. Our work is carried out in four stages and the timings for these, and specifically our on-site work, have been agreed with the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit and Information Governance.</p> <p>Our audit strategy and plan remain flexible as risks and issues change throughout the process. We will review the initial assessments presented in this document throughout the audit and we will evaluate any new risks as they emerge, and respond accordingly.</p>
<b>Key financial statements audit risks</b>	<p>We have completed our initial risk assessment for the financial statements audit and have identified the following significant risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Accounting policies and estimates - The Authority is considering revising its accounting policy regarding the capitalisation of borrowing costs, with such costs now being capitalised where possible. In addition, the approach used to calculate the Minimum Revenue Provision has been revised for 2013/14, with the Annuity Approach now being adopted.</li> <li>■ LGPS triennial valuation - During the year, the Local Government Pension Scheme for Shropshire (the Pension Fund) has undergone a triennial valuation with an effective date of 31 March 2013, in line with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008. There is an audit risk that the data provided to the actuary for this exercise is inaccurate, which could lead to errors in the actuarial figures in the accounts.</li> </ul> <p>Further details are provided on pages 10-11 of this report. We will assess the Authority's progress in addressing these risk areas as part of our interim work and conclude on this work at year end.</p>
<b>VFM audit approach</b>	<p>We have completed our initial risk assessment for the VFM conclusion and have identified the following significant risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Savings plans - The Authority's savings programme for 2013/14 totals £8.6m. The Authority's funding gap is expected to increase to £11.4m in 2014/15 and £22.3m in 2015/16, with savings of £22.2m required across the two years in order to address continuing central government funding reductions; and</li> <li>■ New contracts and projects - As part of the Authority's income strategy, and plans to maximise savings, the Authority has re-tendered their waste contract and proposed two significant commercial projects; the development of new homes for the private rental market and the construction of large scale solar farms on land owned by the Authority. The Authority has incurred, or is committed to incur, substantial costs (£1.1m for housing development and £0.1m for solar farms) regarding the planning and feasibility assessments for these projects. There is the potential that this expenditure could fail to result in future benefits should the outcomes not support the continuation of the projects. As a result, we will carry out audit work on the Authority's arrangements to secure VFM of these costs.</li> </ul> <p>Further details are provided on pages 16-17 of this report.</p>

**This table summarises the headline messages. The remainder of this report provides further details on each area.**

**Audit team, deliverables, timeline and fees**

We have refreshed our audit team this year. Ian Pennington joins the audit team as Engagement Lead, and Adam Bunting assumes the role of Engagement Manager.

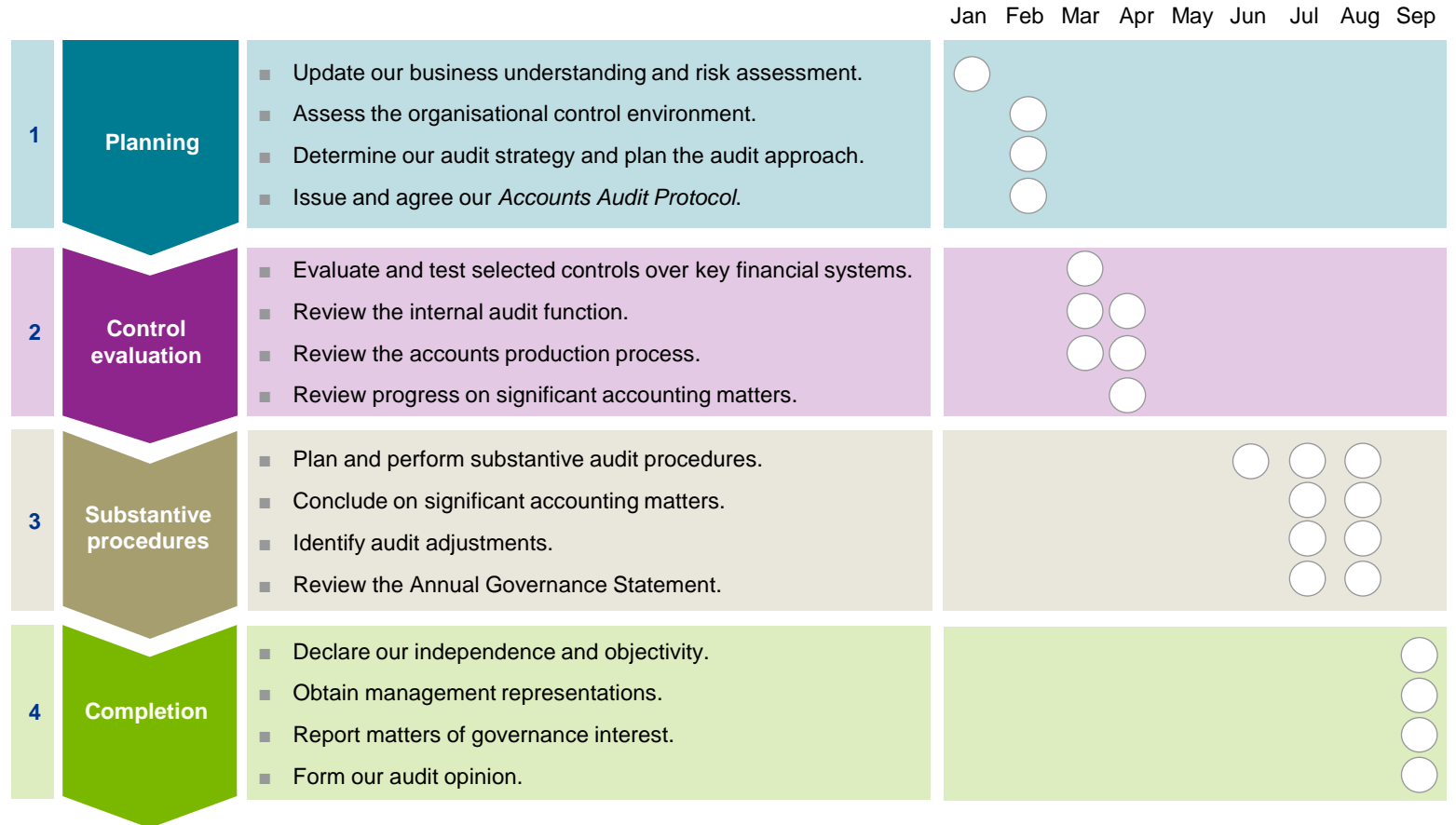
Our main year end audit is currently planned to start in July. Upon conclusion of our work we will again present our findings to you in our *Report to Those Charged with Governance (ISA 260 Report)* in the September 2014 audit committee meeting.

The planned fee for the 2013/14 audit is £155,088. This is unchanged from the position set out in our *Audit Fee Letter 2013/14* and is the same as the fee charged for the 2012/13 audit.

We undertake our work on your financial statements in four key stages during 2014:

- **Planning** (January to February).
- **Control Evaluation** (March to April).
- **Substantive Procedures** (July to August).
- **Completion** (September).

We have summarised the four key stages of our financial statements audit process for you below:



During January and February 2014 we complete our planning work.

We assess the key risks affecting the Authority's financial statements and discuss these with officers.

We assess if there are any weaknesses in respect of central processes that would impact on our audit.

We will issue our *Accounts Audit Protocol* following completion of our planning work.

Our planning work takes place in January and February 2014. This involves the following aspects:

### Planning

- Update our business understanding and risk assessment.
- Assess the organisational control environment.
- Determine our audit strategy and plan the audit approach.
- Issue and agree our *Accounts Audit Protocol*.

### Business understanding and risk assessment

We update our understanding of the Authority's operations and identify any areas that will require particular attention during our audit of the Authority's financial statements.

We identify the key risks affecting the Authority's financial statements. These are based on our knowledge of the Authority, our sector experience and our ongoing dialogue with Authority staff. Any risks identified to date through our risk assessment process are set out in this document. Our audit strategy and plan will, however, remain flexible as the risks and issues change throughout the process. It is the Authority's responsibility to adequately address these issues. We encourage the Authority to continue to raise any technical issues with us as early as possible so that we can agree the accounting treatment in advance of the audit visit.

We meet with the Corporate Finance Team on a regular basis to consider issues and how they are addressed during the financial year end closedown and accounts preparation.

### Organisational control environment

Controls operated at an organisational level often have an impact on controls at an operational level and if there were weaknesses this would impact on our audit. In particular risk management, internal control and ethics and conduct have implications for our financial statements audit.

The scope of the work of your internal auditors also informs our risk assessment.

### Audit strategy and approach to materiality

Our audit is performed in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK and Ireland). The Engagement Lead sets the overall direction of the audit and decides the nature and extent of audit activities. We design audit procedures in response to the risk that the financial statements are materially misstated. The materiality level is a matter of judgement and is set by the Engagement Lead.

In accordance with ISA 320 '*Audit materiality*', we plan and perform our audit to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement and give a true and fair view. Information is material if its omission or misstatement could influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

### Accounts audit protocol

At the end of our planning work we will issue our *Accounts Audit Protocol*. This important document sets out our audit approach and timetable. It also summarises the working papers and other evidence we require the Authority to provide during our interim and final accounts visits.

We met with the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance and his team to discuss mutual learning points from the 2012/13 audit. These will be incorporated into our work plan for 2013/14. We will revisit progress against areas identified for development as the audit progresses.

During March to April 2014 we will complete our interim audit work.

We assess if controls over key financial systems were effective during 2013/14. We work with your Internal Audit team to avoid duplication.

We work with your finance team to enhance the efficiency of the accounts audit.

Our interim visit on site will be completed during March and April. During this time we will complete work in the following areas:

Control Evaluation

- Evaluate and test controls over key financial systems identified as part of our risk assessment.
- Review the work undertaken by the internal audit function on controls relevant to our risk assessment.
- Review the accounts production process.
- Review progress on significant accounting matters.

### Controls over key financial systems

We update our understanding of the Authority's key financial processes where our risk assessment has identified that these are relevant to our final accounts audit and where we have determined that this is the most efficient audit approach to take. We confirm our understanding by completing walkthroughs for these systems. We then test selected controls that address key risks within these systems. The strength of the control framework informs the substantive testing we complete during our final accounts visit.

Where our audit approach is to undertake controls work on financial systems, we seek to rely on any relevant work internal audit have completed to minimise unnecessary duplication of work. Our audit fee is set on the assumption that we can place reliance on their work. We have a joint working protocol and will meet with the Head of Internal Audit to discuss the principles and timetables for the managed audit process for 2013/14.

### Review of internal audit

Where we intend to rely on internal audit's work in respect of the key financial systems identified as part of our risk assessment, auditing standards require us to review aspects of their work. This includes re-performing a sample of tests completed by internal audit. We will provide detailed feedback to the Head of Internal Audit at the end of our interim visit.

### Accounts production process

We raised two recommendations in our *ISA 260 Report 2012/13* relating to the accounts production process. These were regarding:

- the review of unreconciled items identified as part of the cash book reconciliation; and
- the documentation of the fixed asset register reconciliation.

We will assess the Authority's progress in addressing our recommendations and in preparing for the closedown and accounts preparation.

### Significant audit risks

We will discuss the work completed to address the specific risks we identified at the planning stage. Wherever possible, we seek to review relevant workings and evidence and agree the accounting treatment as part of our interim work.

If there are any significant findings arising from our interim work we will present these to the Audit Committee in June 2014.

**During July and August 2014 we will be on site for our substantive work.**

**We complete detailed testing of accounts and disclosures and conclude on significant accounting matters, such as specific risk areas. We then agree any audit adjustments required to the financial statements.**

**We also review the Annual Governance Statement for consistency with our understanding.**

**We will present our *ISA 260 Report* to the Audit Committee in September 2014.**

Our final accounts visit on site has been provisionally scheduled for July 2014. During this time, we will complete the following work:

### Substantive Procedures

- Plan and perform substantive audit procedures.
- Conclude on significant accounting matters.
- Identify and assess any audit adjustments.
- Review the Annual Governance Statement.

### Substantive audit procedures

We complete detailed testing on significant balances and disclosures. The extent of our work is determined by the Engagement Lead based on various factors such as our overall assessment of the Authority's control environment, the effectiveness of controls over individual systems and the management of specific risk factors.

### Significant audit risks

We conclude our testing of the significant risk areas as identified at the planning stage and any additional issues that may have emerged since. We will discuss our findings with the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance prior to reporting to the Audit Committee in September 2014.

### Audit adjustments

During our on site work, we will meet with the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance, the Finance Manager, and the Finance Team Leader on a weekly basis to discuss the progress of the audit, any differences found and any other issues emerging.

At the end of our on site work, we will hold a closure meeting, where we will provide a finalised schedule of audit differences and agree a timetable for the completion stage and the accounts sign off. This will meet the Authority's timescales for publication of the draft Statement of Accounts and Governance Report in advance of the September Audit Committee.

To comply with auditing standards, we are required to report uncorrected audit differences to the Audit Committee. We also report any material misstatements which have been corrected and which we believe should be communicated to you to help you meet your governance responsibilities.

### Annual Governance Statement

We are also required to satisfy ourselves that your Annual Governance Statement complies with the applicable framework and is consistent with our understanding of your operations. Our review of the work of internal audit and consideration of your risk management and governance arrangements are key to this.

We report the findings of our final accounts work in our *ISA 260 Report*, which we will issue in September 2014.

**In addition to the financial statements, we also audit the Authority's Whole of Government Accounts pack.**

**We may need to undertake additional work if we receive objections to the accounts from local electors.**

**We will communicate with you throughout the year, both formally and informally.**

### Whole of government accounts (WGA)

We are required to review and issue an opinion on your WGA consolidation to confirm that this is consistent with your financial statements. The audit approach has been agreed with HM Treasury and the National Audit Office. Deadlines for production of the pack and issue of our opinion on the pack have not yet been confirmed.

### Elector challenge

The Audit Commission Act 1998 gives electors certain rights. These are:

- the right to inspect the accounts;
- the right to ask the auditor questions about the accounts; and
- the right to object to the accounts.

As a result of these rights, in particular the right to object to the accounts, we may need to undertake additional work to form our decision on the elector's objection. The additional work could range from a small piece of work where we interview an officer and review evidence to form our decision, to a more detailed piece of work, where we have to interview a range of officers, review significant amounts of evidence and seek legal representations on the issues raised.

The cost incurred in responding to specific questions or objections raised by electors is not part of the fee. This work will be charged in accordance with the Audit Commission's fee scales.

### Reporting and communication

Reporting is a key part of the audit process, not only in communicating the audit findings for the year, but also in ensuring the audit team are accountable to you in addressing the issues identified as part of the audit strategy. Throughout the year we will communicate with you through meetings with the finance team and the Audit Committee. Our deliverables are included on page 18.

### Independence and objectivity confirmation

Professional standards require auditors to communicate to those charged with governance, at least annually, all relationships that may bear on the firm's independence and the objectivity of the audit engagement partner and audit staff. The standards also place requirements on auditors in relation to integrity, objectivity and independence.

The standards define 'those charged with governance' as 'those persons entrusted with the supervision, control and direction of an entity'. In your case this is the Audit Committee.

KPMG LLP is committed to being and being seen to be independent. APB Ethical Standard 1 Integrity, Objectivity and Independence requires us to communicate to you in writing all significant facts and matters, including those related to the provision of non-audit services and the safeguards put in place which, in our professional judgement, may reasonably be thought to bear on KPMG LLP's independence and the objectivity of the Engagement Lead and the audit team.

Appendix 1 provides further detail on auditors' responsibilities regarding independence and objectivity.

### Confirmation statement

We confirm that as of January 2014 in our professional judgement, KPMG LLP is independent within the meaning of regulatory and professional requirements and the objectivity of the Engagement Lead and audit team is not impaired.

In this section we set out our assessment of the significant risks to the audit of the Authority's financial statements for 2013/14.

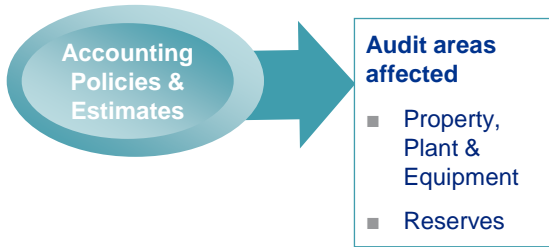
We have outlined the impact that each of the risks identified will have upon our audit.


Professional standards require us to consider two standard risks for all organisations. We are not elaborating on these standard risks in this plan but consider them as a matter of course in our audit and will include any findings arising from our work in our *ISA 260 Report*.

- Management override of controls – Management is typically in a powerful position to perpetrate fraud owing to its ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Our audit methodology incorporates the risk of management override as a default significant risk. In line with our methodology, we carry out appropriate controls testing and substantive procedures, including over journal entries, accounting estimates and significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business, or are otherwise unusual.
- Fraudulent revenue recognition – We do not consider this to be a significant risk for local authorities as there are limited incentives and opportunities to manipulate the way income is recognised. We therefore rebut this risk and do not incorporate specific work into our audit plan in this area over and above our standard fraud procedures.

The table below sets out the significant risk we have identified through our planning work that is specific to the audit of the Authority's financial statements for 2013/14.

We will revisit our assessment throughout the year and should any additional risks present themselves we will adjust our audit strategy as necessary.

Significant Audit Risk	Impact on audit
	<p><b>Risk</b></p> <p>Following a balance sheet efficiency review, the Authority is considering a revision to its accounting policy on the capitalisation of borrowing costs. This revision will result in borrowing costs being capitalised as part of the cost of constructing fixed assets and subsequently charged to the Income &amp; Expenditure account as part of the annual depreciation charge.</p> <p>In addition, the Authority has changed its approach to calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision from 2013/14 onwards. This will see a move from a straight line approach to the annuity approach, which will mean more of the cost is deferred to later years. As well as changing the calculation method going forward, the Authority is to reassess historic charges so as to be in accordance with the annuity method. We have agreed with officers that the approach is permitted in principle</p> <p><b>Our audit work</b></p> <p>We will review the accounting policy changes to ensure that they comply with the Code of Practice and that have been accounted for correctly. We will also test the revised calculations to confirm their accuracy and that the required accounting entries have been properly processed and disclosed.</p>

Significant Audit Risk	Impact on audit
 <p><b>Audit areas affected</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pensions Liability</li> <li>■ Actuarial gains or losses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Risk</b></p> <p>During the year, the Local Government Pension Scheme for Shropshire (the Pension Fund) has undergone a triennial valuation with an effective date of 31 March 2013, in line with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008. The Authority's share of pension assets and liabilities is determined in detail, and a large volume of data is provided to the actuary in order to carry out this triennial valuation.</p> <p>The IAS 19 numbers to be included in the financial statements for 2013/14 will be based on the output of the triennial valuation rolled forward to 31 March 2014. For 2014/15 and 2015/16 the actuary will then roll forward the valuation for accounting purposes based on more limited data.</p> <p>There is an audit risk that the data provided to the actuary for this exercise is inaccurate, which could lead to errors in the actuarial figures in the accounts. Most of the data is provided to the actuary by Shropshire County Council, who administer the Pension Fund.</p> <p><b>Our audit work</b></p> <p>As part of our audit, we will need to agree the data provided to the actuary back to the systems and reports from which it was derived, and test the accuracy of this data.</p> <p>We will liaise with the auditors of the Pension Fund, where this data was provided by the Pension Fund on the Authority's behalf. The Pension Fund may seek to recharge any additional costs arising from this work but we will discuss the approach with the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit &amp; Information Governance .</p>

Our approach to VFM work follows guidance provided by the Audit Commission.

### Background to approach to VFM work

In meeting their statutory responsibilities relating to economy, efficiency and effectiveness, the Commission's *Code of Audit Practice* requires auditors to:

- plan their work based on consideration of the significant risks of giving a wrong conclusion (audit risk); and
- carry out only as much work as is appropriate to enable them to give a safe VFM conclusion.

To provide stability for auditors and audited bodies, the Audit Commission has kept the VFM audit methodology unchanged from last year. There are only relatively minor amendments to reflect the key issues facing the local government sector.

The approach is structured under two themes, as summarised below.

Specified criteria for VFM conclusion	Focus of the criteria	Sub-sections
The organisation has proper arrangements in place for securing <b>financial resilience</b> .	The organisation has robust systems and processes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ manage effectively financial risks and opportunities; and</li> <li>■ secure a stable financial position that enables it to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Financial governance</li> <li>■ Financial planning</li> <li>■ Financial control</li> </ul>
The organisation has proper arrangements for challenging how it <b>secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness</b> .	The organisation is prioritising its resources within tighter budgets, for example by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ achieving cost reductions; and</li> <li>■ improving efficiency and productivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Prioritising resources</li> <li>■ Improving efficiency and productivity</li> </ul>

We will follow a risk based approach to target audit effort on the areas of greatest audit risk.

### Overview of the VFM audit approach

The key elements of the VFM audit approach are summarised below.



Each of these stages are summarised further below.

VFM audit stage	Audit approach
VFM audit risk assessment	<p>We consider the relevance and significance of the potential business risks faced by all local authorities, and other risks that apply specifically to the Authority. These are the significant operational and financial risks in achieving statutory functions and objectives, which are relevant to auditors' responsibilities under the <i>Code of Audit Practice</i>.</p> <p>In doing so we consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Authority's own assessment of the risks it faces, and its arrangements to manage and address its risks;</li> <li>information from the Audit Commission's VFM profile tool and financial ratios tool;</li> <li>evidence gained from previous audit work, including the response to that work; and</li> <li>the work of other inspectorates and review agencies.</li> </ul>

Our VFM audit will draw heavily on other audit work which is relevant to our VFM responsibilities and the results of last year's VFM audit.

We will then form an assessment of residual audit risk to identify if there are any areas where more detailed VFM audit work is required.

VFM audit stage	Audit approach
Linkages with financial statements and other audit work	<p>There is a degree of overlap between the work we do as part of the VFM audit and our financial statements audit. For example, our financial statements audit includes an assessment and testing of the Authority's organisational control environment, including the Authority's financial management and governance arrangements, many aspects of which are relevant to our VFM audit responsibilities.</p> <p>We have always sought to avoid duplication of audit effort by integrating our financial statements and VFM work, and this will continue. We will therefore draw upon relevant aspects of our financial statements audit work to inform the VFM audit.</p>
Assessment of residual audit risk	<p>It is possible that further audit work may be necessary in some areas to ensure sufficient coverage of the two VFM criteria.</p> <p>Such work may involve interviews with relevant officers and /or the review of documents such as policies, plans and minutes. We may also refer to any self assessment the Authority may prepare against the characteristics.</p> <p>To inform any further work we must draw together an assessment of residual audit risk, taking account of the work undertaken already. This will identify those areas requiring further specific audit work to inform the VFM conclusion.</p> <p>At this stage it is not possible to indicate the number or type of residual audit risks that might require additional audit work, and therefore the overall scale of work cannot be easily predicted. If a significant amount of work is necessary then we will need to review the adequacy of our agreed audit fee. Any change to our audit fee will be discussed and agreed with the authority in advance.</p>
Identification of specific VFM audit work	<p>If we identify residual audit risks, then we will highlight the risk to the Authority and consider the most appropriate audit response in each case, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ considering the results of work by the Authority, inspectorates and other review agencies; and</li> <li>■ carrying out local risk-based work to form a view on the adequacy of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</li> </ul>

Where relevant, we may draw upon the range of audit tools and review guides developed by the Audit Commission.

We will conclude on the results of the VFM audit through our *ISA 260 Report*.

VFM audit stage	Audit approach
Delivery of local risk based work	<p>Depending on the nature of the residual audit risk identified, we may be able to draw on audit tools and sources of guidance when undertaking specific local risk-based audit work, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ local savings review guides based on selected previous Audit Commission national studies; and</li> <li>■ update briefings for previous Audit Commission studies.</li> </ul> <p>The tools and guides will support our work where we have identified a local risk that is relevant to them. For any residual audit risks that relate to issues not covered by one of these tools, we will develop an appropriate audit approach drawing on the detailed VFM guidance and other sources of information.</p>
Concluding on VFM arrangements	<p>At the conclusion of the VFM audit we will consider the results of the work undertaken and assess the assurance obtained against each of the VFM themes regarding the adequacy of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.</p> <p>If any issues are identified that may be significant to this assessment, and in particular if there are issues that indicate we may need to consider qualifying our VFM conclusion, we will discuss these with management as soon as possible. Such issues will also be considered more widely as part of KPMG's quality control processes, to help ensure the consistency of auditors' decisions.</p>
Reporting	<p>On the following page, we report the results of our initial risk assessment.</p> <p>We will report on the results of the VFM audit through our <i>ISA 260 Report</i>. This will summarise any specific matters arising, and the basis for our overall conclusion.</p> <p>The key output from the work will be the VFM conclusion (i.e. our opinion on the Authority's arrangements for securing VFM), which forms part of our audit report.</p> <p>If considered appropriate, we may produce a separate report on the VFM audit, either overall or for any specific reviews that we may undertake.</p>

We have identified two VFM risks.

In most cases we are satisfied that external or internal scrutiny provides sufficient assurance that the Authority's current arrangements in relation to these risk areas are adequate.

We will carry out additional risk-based work in the following areas:

- New projects and contracts.

In line with the risk-based approach set out on the previous page, we have


- assessed the Authority's key business risks which are relevant to our VFM conclusion;
- identified the residual audit risks for our VFM conclusion, taking account of work undertaken in previous years or as part of our financial statements audit;
- considered the results of relevant work by the Authority, the Audit Commission, other inspectorates and review agencies in relation to these risk areas; and


- concluded to what extent we need to carry out additional risk-based work.

Below we set out our preliminary findings in respect of those areas where we have identified a residual audit risk for our VFM conclusion,

There are some potential implications for our financial statements audit work.

We will report our final conclusions in our *ISA 260 Report 2013/14*.

Key VFM risk	Risk description and link to VFM conclusion	Preliminary assessment
	<p>As at December 2013, the Authority is forecasting that it will deliver its 2013/14 budget in overall terms. This includes a savings programme for 2013/14 totalling £8.6m.</p> <p>The Authority currently estimates that its funding gap will increase to £11.4m in 2014/15 and £22.3m in 2015/16. As a result the Council will need to achieve a further £22.2m in savings by the end of 2015/16 in order to address ongoing reductions to local authority funding. Against a backdrop of continued demand pressures in Adult Social Care and Children's Services it will become more and more difficult to deliver these savings in a way that secures longer term financial and operational sustainability. The Authority is forecasting that its base budget gap will be £31.0m in 2015/16.</p> <p>This is relevant to both the financial resilience and economy, efficiency and effectiveness criteria of the VFM conclusion.</p>	<p><b>Specific additional risk based work required: No</b></p> <p>The Authority has identified savings plans for all areas of its operations. These are monitored on a regular basis and slippages investigated. No specific work has been undertaken by the Audit Commission, other inspectorates or review agencies in relation to these risks.</p>

Key VFM risk	Risk description and link to VFM conclusion	Preliminary assessment
	<p>During 2012/13 the Authority re-tendered the contract for the collection, treatment and disposal of its waste in attempt to maximise savings. The 24 year contract was awarded to Veolia Environmental Services in October 2013.</p> <p>As part of its income strategy the Authority has identified a significant commercial opportunity which will involve the development of new homes for the private rental market. The Authority has committed to undertake a detailed feasibility study, beginning in 2014 to assess the viability of the project. The costs associated with this study are approximately £1.1m in 2013/14.</p> <p>Similarly, the Authority has committed to costs of £0.1m regarding its energy strategy and the proposal to develop a commercial-scale solar farm on Authority-owned land.</p> <p>This is relevant to the economy, efficiency and effectiveness criteria of the VFM conclusion.</p>	<p><b>Specific additional risk based work required: Yes</b></p> <p>We will assess the specific costs involved with each project, and the measures the Authority has taken to ensure that this represents value for money, in order to inform our overall VFM conclusion.</p> <p>We will also review the accounting treatment applied to these transactions in order to ensure that it is appropriate.</p>

At the end of each stage of our audit we issue certain deliverables, including reports and opinions.

Our key deliverables will be delivered to a high standard and on time.

We will discuss and agree as appropriate each report with the Authority's officers prior to publication.

Deliverable	Purpose	Committee dates
<b>Planning</b>		
<b>External Audit Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Outlines our audit approach.</li> <li>■ Identifies areas of audit focus and planned procedures.</li> </ul>	<b>January 2014</b>
<b>Control evaluation and Substantive procedures</b>		
<b>Report to Those Charged with Governance (ISA 260 Report)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Details control and process issues.</li> <li>■ Details the resolution of key audit issues.</li> <li>■ Communicates adjusted and unadjusted audit differences.</li> <li>■ Highlights performance improvement recommendations identified during our audit.</li> <li>■ Comments on the Authority's value for money arrangements.</li> </ul>	<b>September 2014</b>
<b>Completion</b>		
<b>Auditor's Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provides an opinion on your accounts (including the Annual Governance Statement).</li> <li>■ Concludes on the arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources (the VFM conclusion).</li> </ul>	<b>September 2014</b>
<b>Whole of Government Accounts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide our opinion on the Authority's WGA pack submission.</li> </ul>	<b>September 2014</b>
<b>Annual Audit Letter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Summarises the outcomes and the key issues arising from our audit work for the year.</li> </ul>	<b>January 2015</b> (issued to the Authority in December 2014)

**The fee for the 2013/14 audit of the Authority is £155,088. The fee has not changed from that set out in our *Audit Fee Letter 2013/14* issued in June 2013.**

**Our audit fee remains indicative and based on you meeting our expectations of your support.**

**Meeting these expectations will help the delivery of our audit within the proposed audit fee.**

### Audit fee

Our *Audit Fee Letter 2013/14* presented to you in June 2013 first set out our fees for the 2013/14 audit. We have not considered it necessary to make any changes to the agreed fees at this stage.

Our audit fee includes our work on the VFM conclusion and our audit of the Authority's financial statements.

The planned audit fee for 2013/14 is £155,088. This is the same as the final 2012/13 audit fee.

### Audit fee assumptions

The fee is based on a number of assumptions, including that you will provide us with complete and materially accurate financial statements, with good quality supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes. It is imperative that you achieve this. If this is not the case and we have to complete more work than was envisaged, we will need to charge additional fees for this work. In setting the fee, we have assumed:

- the level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements is not significantly different from that identified for 2012/13;
- you will inform us of any significant developments impacting on our audit;
- you will identify and implement any changes required under the *CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2013/14* within your 2013/14 financial statements;
- you will comply with the expectations set out and agreed in our *Accounts Audit Protocol*, including:
  - the financial statements are made available for audit in line with the agreed timescales;
  - good quality working papers and records will be provided at the start of the final accounts audit;

- requested information will be provided within the agreed timescales;
- prompt responses will be provided to queries and draft reports;
- internal audit meets appropriate professional standards;
- internal audit adheres to our joint working protocol and completes appropriate work on all systems that provide material figures for the financial statements and we can place reliance on them for our audit; and
- additional work will not be required to address questions or objections raised by local government electors or for special investigations such as those arising from disclosures under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Meeting these expectations will help ensure the delivery of our audit within the agreed audit fee.

The Audit Commission requires us to inform you of specific actions you could take to keep the audit fee low. Future audit fees can be kept to a minimum if the Authority achieves an efficient and well-controlled financial closedown and accounts production process which complies with good practice and appropriately addresses new accounting developments and risk areas.

### Changes to the audit plan

Changes to this plan and the audit fee may be necessary if:

- new significant audit risks emerge;
- additional work is required of us by the Audit Commission or other regulators; and
- additional work is required as a result of changes in legislation, professional standards or financial reporting requirements.

If changes to this plan and the audit fee are required, we will discuss and agree these initially with the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance in advance.

This appendix summarises auditors' responsibilities regarding independence and objectivity.

### Independence and objectivity

Auditors are required by the Code to:

- carry out their work with independence and objectivity;
- exercise their professional judgement and act independently of both the Commission and the audited body;
- maintain an objective attitude at all times and not act in any way that might give rise to, or be perceived to give rise to, a conflict of interest; and
- resist any improper attempt to influence their judgement in the conduct of the audit.

In addition, the Code specifies that auditors should not carry out work for an audited body that does not relate directly to the discharge of the auditors' functions under the Code. If the Authority invites us to carry out risk-based work in a particular area, which cannot otherwise be justified to support our audit conclusions, it will be clearly differentiated as work carried out under section 35 of the Audit Commission Act 1998.

The Code also states that the Commission issues guidance under its powers to appoint auditors and to determine their terms of appointment. The Standing Guidance for Auditors includes several references to arrangements designed to support and reinforce the requirements relating to independence, which auditors must comply with. These are as follows:

- Auditors and senior members of their staff who are directly involved in the management, supervision or delivery of Commission-related work, and senior members of their audit teams should not take part in political activity.
- No member or employee of the firm should accept or hold an appointment as a member of an audited body whose auditor is, or is proposed to be, from the same firm. In addition, no member or employee of the firm should accept or hold such appointments at related bodies, such as those linked to the audited body through a strategic partnership.

- Audit staff are expected not to accept appointments as Governors at certain types of schools within the local authority.
- Auditors and their staff should not be employed in any capacity (whether paid or unpaid) by an audited body or other organisation providing services to an audited body whilst being employed by the firm.
- Firms are expected to comply with the requirements of the Commission's protocols on provision of personal financial or tax advice to certain senior individuals at audited bodies, independence considerations in relation to procurement of services at audited bodies, and area wide internal audit work.
- Auditors appointed by the Commission should not accept engagements which involve commenting on the performance of other Commission auditors on Commission work without first consulting the Commission.
- Auditors are expected to comply with the Commission's policy for the Engagement Lead to be changed on a periodic basis.
- Audit suppliers are required to obtain the Commission's written approval prior to changing any Engagement Lead in respect of each audited body.
- Certain other staff changes or appointments require positive action to be taken by Firms as set out in the standing guidance.

## Appendix 2: KPMG Audit Quality Framework

We continually focus on delivering a high quality audit.

This means building robust quality control procedures into the core audit process rather than bolting them on at the end, and embedding the right attitude and approaches into management and staff.

KPMG's Audit Quality Framework consists of seven key drivers combined with the commitment of each individual in KPMG.

The diagram summarises our approach and each level is expanded upon.

At KPMG we consider audit quality is not just about reaching the right opinion, but how we reach that opinion. KPMG views the outcome of a quality audit as the delivery of an appropriate and independent opinion in compliance with the auditing standards. It is about the processes, thought and integrity behind the audit report. This means, above all, being independent, compliant with our legal and professional requirements, and offering insight and impartial advice to you, our client.

KPMG's Audit Quality Framework consists of seven key drivers combined with the commitment of each individual in KPMG. We use our seven drivers of audit quality to articulate what audit quality means to KPMG.

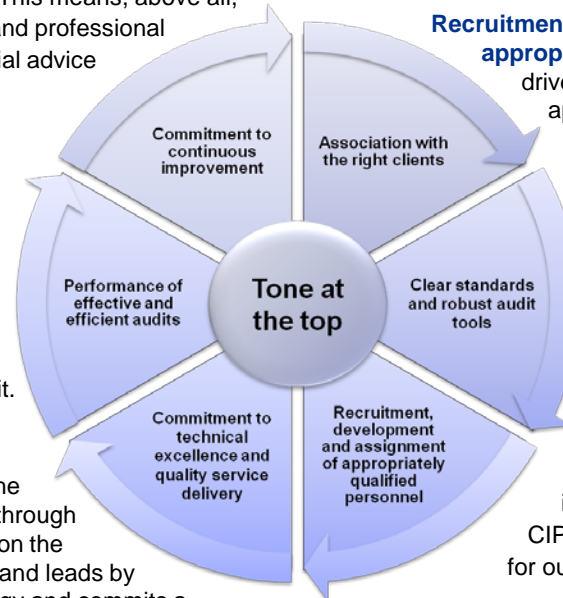
We believe it is important to be transparent about the processes that sit behind a KPMG audit report, so you can have absolute confidence in us and in the quality of our audit.

**Tone at the top:** We make it clear that audit quality is part of our culture and values and therefore non-negotiable. Tone at the top is the umbrella that covers all the drivers of quality through a focused and consistent voice. Ian Pennington the Engagement Lead sets the tone on the audit and leads by example with a clearly articulated audit strategy and commits a significant proportion of his time throughout the audit directing and supporting the team.

**Association with right clients:** We undertake rigorous client and engagement acceptance and continuance procedures which are vital to the ability of KPMG to provide high-quality professional services to our clients.

**Clear standards and robust audit tools:** We expect our audit professionals to adhere to the clear standards we set and we provide a range of tools to support them in meeting these expectations. The global rollout of KPMG's eAudIT application has significantly enhanced

existing audit functionality. eAudIT enables KPMG to deliver a highly technically enabled audit. All of our staff have a searchable data base, that includes all published accounting standards, the KPMG Audit Manual Guidance as well as other relevant sector specific publications, such as the Audit Commission's *Code of Audit Practice*.



**Recruitment, development and assignment of appropriately qualified personnel:** One of the key drivers of audit quality is assigning professionals appropriate to the Authority's risks. We take great care to assign the right people to the right clients based on a number of factors including their skill set, capacity and relevant experience.

We have a well developed technical infrastructure across the firm that puts us in a strong position to deal with any emerging issues. This includes:

- A national public sector technical director who has responsibility for co-ordinating our response to emerging accounting issues, influencing accounting bodies (such as CIPFA) as well as acting as a sounding board for our auditors.
- A national technical network of public sector audit professionals is established that meets on a monthly basis and is chaired by our national technical director.
- A dedicated Department of Professional Practice comprised of over 100 staff that provide support to our audit teams and deliver our web-based quarterly technical training.

We continually focus on delivering a high quality audit.

This means building robust quality control procedures into the core audit process rather than bolting them on at the end, and embedding the right attitude and approaches into management and staff.

Quality must build on the foundations of well trained staff and a robust methodology.

**Commitment to technical excellence and quality service delivery:** Our professionals bring you up-to-the-minute and accurate technical solutions and together with our specialists are capable of solving complex audit issues and delivering valued insights.

Our audit team draws upon specialist resources including Forensic, Corporate Finance, Transaction Services, Advisory, Taxation, Actuarial and IT. We promote technical excellence and quality service delivery through training and accreditation, developing business understanding and sector knowledge, investment in technical support, development of specialist networks and effective consultation processes.

**Performance of effective and efficient audits:** We understand that how an audit is conducted is as important as the final result. Our drivers of audit quality maximise the performance of the engagement team during the conduct of every audit. We expect our people to demonstrate certain key behaviours in the performance of effective and efficient audits. The key behaviors that our auditors apply throughout the audit process to deliver effective and efficient audits are outlined below:

- timely Engagement Lead and manager involvement;
- critical assessment of audit evidence;
- exercise of professional judgment and professional scepticism;
- ongoing mentoring and on the job coaching, supervision and review;
- appropriately supported and documented conclusions;
- if relevant, appropriate involvement of the Engagement Quality Control reviewer (EQC review);
- clear reporting of significant findings;
- insightful, open and honest two-way communication with those charged with governance; and
- client confidentiality, information security and data privacy.

**Commitment to continuous improvement:** We employ a broad range of mechanisms to monitor our performance, respond to feedback and understand our opportunities for improvement.

### Our quality review results

We are able to evidence the quality of our audits through the results of National Audit Office and Audit Commission reviews. The Audit Commission publishes information on the quality of work provided by KPMG (and all other firms) for audits undertaken on behalf of them (<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/audit-regime/audit-quality-review-programme/principal-audits/kpmg-audit-quality>).

The latest Annual Regulatory Compliance and Quality Report (issued June 2013) showed that we performed highly against the Audit Commission's criteria. We were one of only two firms to receive a combined audit quality and regulatory compliance rating of green for 2012/13.



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