

# Audit Strategy Memorandum

Ashfield District Council

Year ended 31 March 2023



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This document is to be regarded as confidential to Ashfield District Council. It has been prepared for the sole use of the Audit Committee as the appropriate sub-committee charged with governance. No responsibility is accepted to any other person in respect of the whole or part of its contents. Our written consent must first be obtained before this document, or any part of it, is disclosed to a third party.

Ashfield District Council  
Council offices  
Urban Road  
Kirkby in Ashfield  
Nottinghamshire  
NG17 8DA

19 September 2023

Dear Audit Committee Members

## Audit Strategy Memorandum – Year ended 31 March 2023

We are pleased to present our Audit Strategy Memorandum for Ashfield District Council for the year ended 31 March 2023. The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit approach, highlight significant audit risks and areas of key judgements and provide you with the details of our audit team. As it is a fundamental requirement that an auditor is, and is seen to be, independent of its clients, section 7 of this document also summarises our considerations and conclusions on our independence as auditors. We consider two-way communication with you to be key to a successful audit and important in:

- reaching a mutual understanding of the scope of the audit and the responsibilities of each of us;
- sharing information to assist each of us to fulfil our respective responsibilities;
- providing you with constructive observations arising from the audit process; and
- ensuring that we, as external auditors, gain an understanding of your attitude and views in respect of the internal and external operational, financial, compliance and other risks facing Ashfield District Council which may affect the audit, including the likelihood of those risks materialising and how they are monitored and managed.

With that in mind, we see this document, which has been prepared following our initial planning discussions with management, as being the basis for a discussion around our audit approach, any questions, concerns or input you may have on our approach or role as auditor. This document also contains an appendix that outlines our key communications with you during the course of the audit, and explains the implications of the introduction of the new auditing standard for Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement: ISA (UK) 315 (Revised 2019).

Client service is extremely important to us and we strive to provide technical excellence with the highest level of service quality, together with continuous improvement to exceed your expectations so, if you have any concerns or comments about this document or audit approach, please contact me on [mark.surrIDGE@mazars.co.uk](mailto:mark.surrIDGE@mazars.co.uk).

Yours faithfully

Mark SurrIDGE, Key Audit Partner

Mazars LLP  
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# 01

Section 01:

**Engagement and  
responsibilities summary**

# 1. Engagement and responsibilities summary

## Overview of engagement

We are appointed to perform the external audit of Ashfield District Council (the Council) for the year to 31 March 2023. The scope of our engagement is set out in the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies, issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) available from the PSAA website: <https://www.psa.co.uk/managing-audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies/>. Our responsibilities are principally derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO), as outlined below.

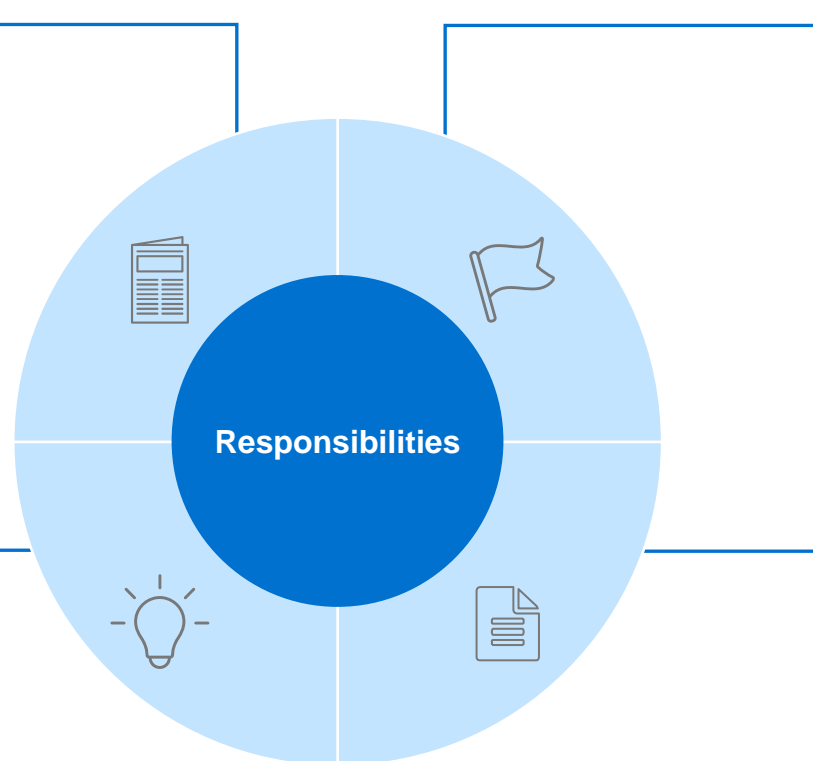
### Audit opinion

We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. Our audit does not relieve management or the Audit Committee, as those charged with governance, of their responsibilities.

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the assessment of whether it is appropriate for the Council to prepare its accounts on a going concern basis. As auditors, we are required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding, and conclude on: a) whether a material uncertainty related to going concern exists; and b) consider the appropriateness of the Chief Finance Officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements.

### Value for money

We are also responsible for forming a commentary on the arrangements that the Council has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We discuss our approach to Value for Money work further in section 5 of this report.



### Fraud

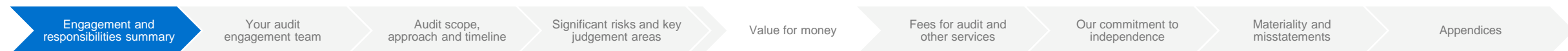
The responsibility for safeguarding assets and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with both those charged with governance and management. This includes establishing and maintaining internal controls over reliability of financial reporting.

As part of our audit procedures in relation to fraud we are required to enquire of those charged with governance, including key management Internal audit and other key individuals where relevant as to their knowledge of instances of fraud, the risk of fraud and their views on internal controls that mitigate the fraud risks. In accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), we plan and perform our audit so as to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements taken as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. However our audit should not be relied upon to identify all such misstatements.

### Wider reporting and electors' rights

We report to the NAO on the consistency of the Council's financial statements with its Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) submission.

The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and consider any objection made to the accounts. We also have a broad range of reporting responsibilities and powers that are unique to the audit of local authorities in the United Kingdom



# 02

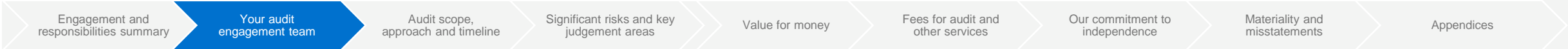
Section 02:

**Your audit engagement team**

# 2. Your audit engagement team

Below is your audit engagement team and their contact details.

Who	Role	Email
Mark SurrIDGE Partner	Engagement Lead	Mark.SurrIDGE@mazars.co.uk
Michael Butler Manager	Engagement Manager	Michael.butler@mazars.co.uk
Garima Garg Assistant Manager	Engagement Senior	Garima.Garg@mazars.co.uk



# 03

Section 03:

**Audit scope, approach and timeline**



# 3. Audit scope, approach and timeline

## Audit scope

Our audit approach is designed to provide an audit that complies with all professional requirements.

Our audit of the financial statements will be conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), relevant ethical and professional standards, our own audit approach and in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work is focused on those aspects of your activities which we consider to have a higher risk of material misstatement, such as those impacted by management judgement and estimation, application of new accounting standards, changes of accounting policy, changes to operations or areas which have been found to contain material errors in the past.

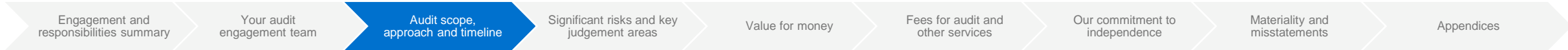
## Audit approach

Our audit approach is risk-based and primarily driven by the issues that we consider lead to a higher risk of material misstatement of the accounts. Once we have completed our risk assessment, we develop our audit strategy and design audit procedures in response to the risks identified.

If we conclude that appropriately-designed controls are in place then we may plan to test and rely upon these controls. If we decide controls are not appropriately designed, or we decide it would be more efficient to do so, we may take a wholly substantive approach to our audit testing. Substantive procedures are audit procedures designed to detect material misstatements at the assertion level and comprise: tests of details (of classes of transactions, account balances, and disclosures); and substantive analytical procedures. Irrespective of the assessed risks of material misstatement, which take into account our evaluation of the operating effectiveness of controls, we are required to design and perform substantive procedures for each material class of transactions, account balance, and disclosure.

Our audit will be planned and performed so as to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement and give a true and fair view. The concept of materiality and how we define a misstatement is explained in more detail in section 8.

The diagram on the next page outlines the procedures we perform at the different stages of the audit.



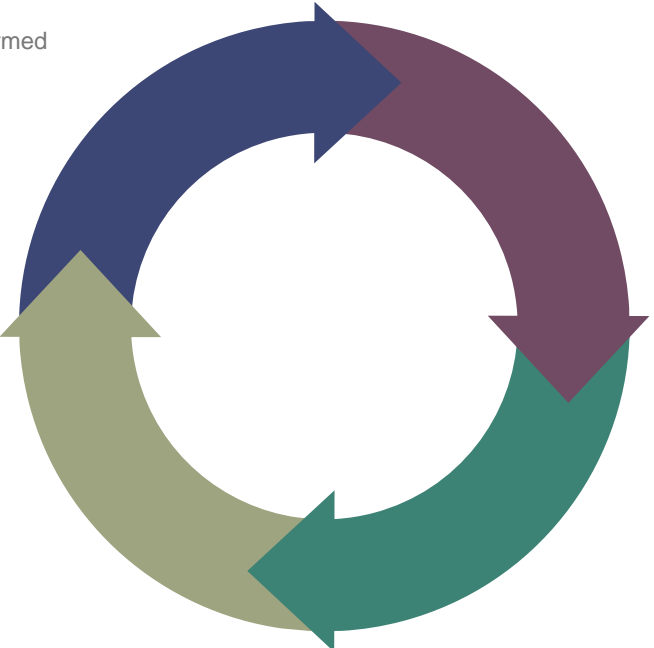
# 3. Audit scope, approach and timeline

## Planning and Risk Assessment (January/February 2023)

- Planning visit and developing our understanding of the Council
- Initial opinion and value for money risk assessments
- Considering proposed accounting treatments and accounting policies
- Developing the audit strategy and planning the audit work to be performed
- Agreeing timetable and deadlines
- Risk assessment analytical procedures
- Determination of materiality

## Interim (March/April 2023)

- Documenting systems and controls
- Performing walkthroughs
- Interim controls testing including tests of IT general controls
- Early substantive testing of transactions
- Reassessment of audit plan and revision if necessary

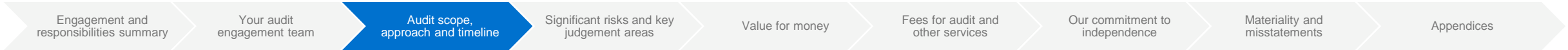


## Completion (October - December 2023)

- Final review and disclosure checklist of financial statements
- Final partner review
- Agreeing content of letter of representation
- Reporting to the Audit committee
- Reviewing subsequent events
- Signing the independent auditor's report

## Fieldwork (October - December 2023)

- Receiving and reviewing draft financial statements
- Delivering our audit strategy starting with significant risks and high risk areas including detailed testing of transactions, account balances and disclosures
- Communicating progress and issues
- Clearance meeting



# 3. Audit scope, approach and timeline

## Reliance on internal audit

We will liaise with Internal Audit to discuss the progress and findings of their work and to inform our continual risk assessment.

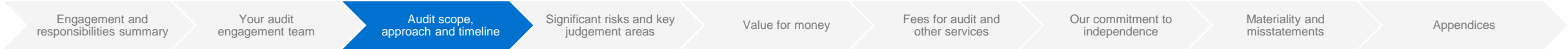
## Management’s and our experts

Management makes use of experts in specific areas when preparing the Council’s financial statements. We also use experts to assist us to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence on specific items of account.

Item of account	Management’s expert	Our expert
Property, plant and Equipment and Investment property	<p><b>Internal valuer</b> Mr. M Kirk – Estates Manager</p> <p><b>External Valuer/s</b> Covers Other PPE and Investment Properties</p>	<p>None – Third party evidence provided by NAO to support our challenge of valuations assumptions.</p> <p>We may seek to engage our Internal Valuer to support our audit testing.</p>
Pensions	<b>Barnett Waddingham</b> Actuary for Nottinghamshire Pension Fund	PWC (Consulting actuary appointed by NAO)
Financial Instruments Disclosures	Link asset Management (LAM) Treasury management advisors	None- We expect to use information supplied by LAM to support our challenge and assumptions to management

## Service organisations

International Auditing Standards (UK) (ISAs) define service organisations as third party organisations that provide services to the Council that are part of its information systems relevant to financial reporting. We are required to obtain an understanding of the services provided by service organisations as well as evaluating the design and implementation of controls over those services. We have not identified any service organisations for 2022/23.



# 04

Section 04:

**Significant risks and other key judgement areas**

# 4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Following the risk assessment approach discussed in section 3 of this document, we have identified risks relevant to the audit of financial statements. The risks that we identify are categorised as significant, enhanced or standard. The definitions of the level of risk rating are given below:

## Significant risk

Significant risks are those risks assessed as being close to the upper end of the spectrum of inherent risk, based on the combination of the likelihood of a misstatement occurring and the magnitude of any potential misstatement. Fraud risks are always assessed as significant risks as required by auditing standards, including management override of controls and revenue recognition.

## Enhanced risk

An enhanced risk is an area of higher assessed risk of material misstatement at audit assertion level other than a significant risk. Enhanced risks require additional consideration but does not rise to the level of a significant risk, these include but may not be limited to:

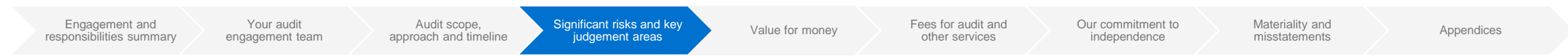
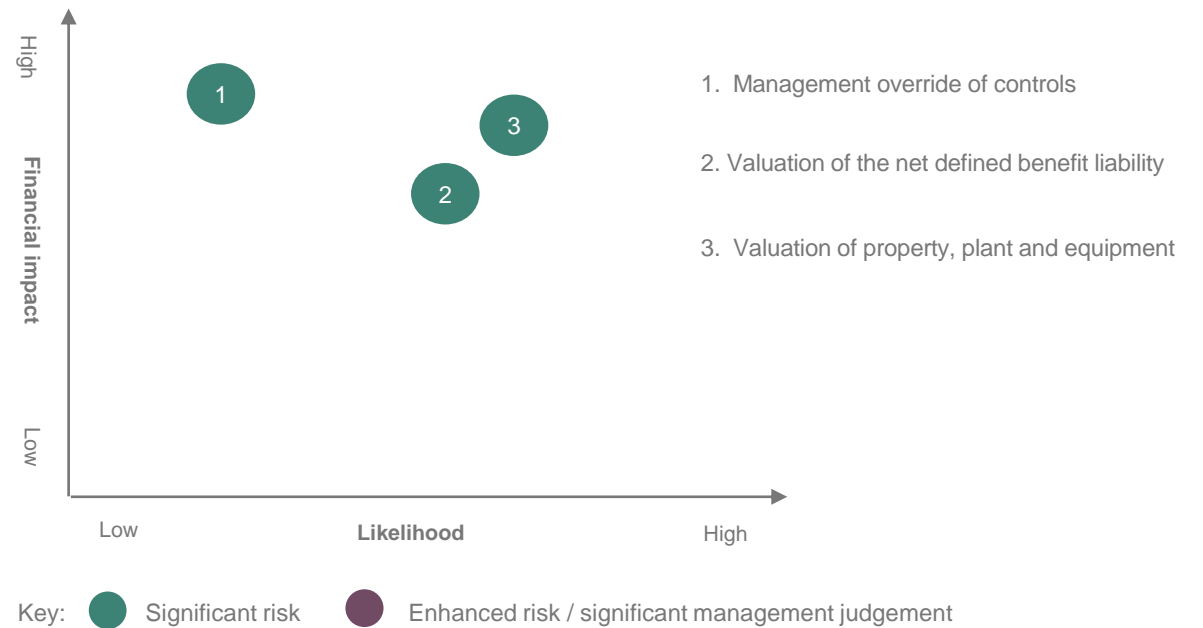
- key areas of management judgement, including accounting estimates which are material but are not considered to give rise to a significant risk of material misstatement; and
- other audit assertion risks arising from significant events or transactions that occurred during the period.

## Standard risk

This is related to relatively routine, non-complex transactions that tend to be subject to systematic processing and require little management judgement. Although it is considered that there is a risk of material misstatement (RMM), there are no elevated or special factors related to the nature, the likely magnitude of the potential misstatements or the likelihood of the risk occurring.

## Summary risk assessment

The summary risk assessment, illustrated in the table below, highlights those risks which we deem to be significant and other enhanced risks in respect of the Council. We have summarised our audit response to these risks on the next page.



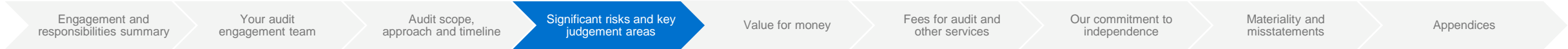
# 4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

## Specific identified audit risks and planned testing strategy

We have presented below in more detail the reasons for the risk assessment highlighted above, and also our testing approach with respect to significant risks. An audit is a dynamic process, should we change our view of risk or approach to address the identified risks during the course of our audit, we will report this to the Audit committee.

## Significant risks

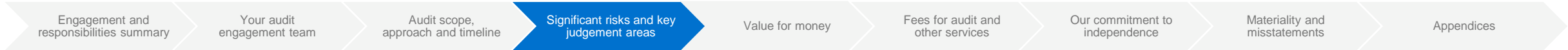
	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
1	<p><b>Management override of controls</b> This is a mandatory significant risk on all audits due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur.</p> <p>Management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur there is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud on all audits.</p>	●	○	○	We plan to address the management override of controls risk through performing audit work over accounting estimates, journal entries and significant transactions outside the normal course of business or otherwise unusual.



# 4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

## Significant risks (continued)

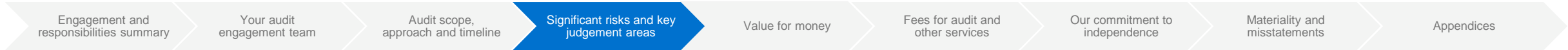
	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
2	<p><b>Net defined benefit liability valuation</b>  <b>£109.7m (2021/22)</b></p> <p>The Council's accounts contain material liabilities relating to the local government pension scheme.</p> <p>The council uses an actuary to provide an annual valuation of these liabilities in line with the requirements of IAS 19 Employee Benefits.</p> <p>Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with this valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.</p>	○	●	●	<p>We plan to address the risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>critically assessing the competency, objectivity and independence of the Actuary engaged by the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund;</li> <li>liaising with the auditors of the Nottinghamshire County Pension Fund to gain assurance over the design and implementation of controls in place at the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund. This will include the processes and controls in place to ensure data provided to the Actuary by the Pension Fund for the purposes of the IAS 19 valuation is complete and accurate;</li> <li>reviewing the appropriateness of the Pension Asset and Liability valuation methodologies applied by the pension Fund Actuary, and the key assumptions included within the valuations. This will include comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information by the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office; and</li> <li>agreeing the data in the IAS 19 valuation report provided by the Actuary for accounting purposes to the pension accounting entries and disclosures in the Council's financial statements.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above, early sector wide information is that there may be a pension surplus arising in 2022/23, which requires specific consideration under IFRC 14.</p>



# 4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

## Significant risks

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
3	<p><b>Valuation of council dwellings, property, plant and equipment and investment property</b></p> <p>Property related assets are a significant balance on the council's balance sheet. The valuation of these properties is complex and is subject to a number of management assumptions and judgements.</p> <p>Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.</p> <p>At the planning stage of the audit, this risk covers (figures have been taken from the audited 2021/22 financial statements);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HRA Council Dwellings = £247.1m</li> <li>• Property, plant and equipment = £64.9m</li> <li>• Investment properties = £50.6m</li> </ul>	○	●	●	<p>We plan to address this risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• critically assessing the Council's valuers' scope of work, qualifications, objectivity and independence to carry out the required programme of revaluations;</li> <li>• considering whether the overall revaluation methodologies used by the Council's valuers are in line with industry practice, the CIPFA code of practice and the Council's accounting policies;</li> <li>• assessing whether valuation movements are in line with market expectations by considering valuation trends;</li> <li>• critically assessing the approach that the Council adopts to ensure that assets that are not subject to revaluation in 2022/23 are materially correct, including considering the robustness of that approach in light of the valuation information reported by the Council's valuers; and</li> <li>• testing a sample of valuations, challenging the underlying assumptions, and agreeing key inputs to source data. In doing so, we may engage our own valuation expert to support our work.</li> </ul>





# 05

Section 05:

**Value for money**

# 5. Value for money

## The framework for Value for Money work

We are required to form a view as to whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out in order to form our view, and sets out the overall criterion and sub-criteria that we are required to consider.

2022/23 will be the third audit year where we are undertaking our value for money (VFM) work under the 2020 Code of Audit Practice (the Code). Our responsibility remains to be satisfied that the Council has proper arrangements in place and to report in the audit report and/or the audit completion certificate where we identify significant weaknesses in arrangements. Separately we provide a commentary on the Council's arrangements in the Auditor's Annual Report.

## Specified reporting criteria

The Code requires us to structure our commentary to report under three specified criteria:

1. **Financial sustainability** – how the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services
2. **Governance** – how the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks
3. **Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness** – how the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services

## Our approach

Our work falls into three primary phases as outlined opposite. We need to gather sufficient evidence to support our commentary on the Council's arrangements and to identify and report on any significant weaknesses in arrangements. Where significant weaknesses are identified we are required to report these to the Council and make recommendations for improvement. Such recommendations can be made at any point during the audit cycle and we are not expected to wait until issuing our overall commentary to do so.

### Planning and risk assessment

Obtaining an understanding of the Council's arrangements for each specified reporting criteria. Relevant information sources will include:

- NAO guidance and supporting information
- Information from internal and external sources including regulators
- Knowledge from previous audits and other audit work undertaken in the year
- Interviews and discussions with staff and members

### Additional risk based procedures and evaluation

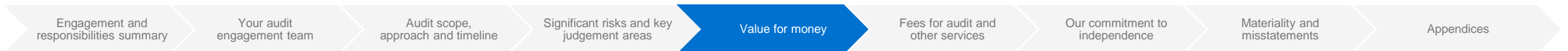
Where our planning work identifies risks of significant weaknesses, we will undertake additional procedures to determine whether there is a significant weakness.

### Reporting

We will provide a summary of the work we have undertaken and our judgements against each of the specified reporting criteria as part of our commentary on arrangements. This will form part of the Auditor's Annual Report.

Our commentary will also highlight:

- Significant weaknesses identified and our recommendations for improvement
- Emerging issues or other matters that do not represent significant weaknesses but still require attention from the Council.



# 06

Section 06:

**Fees for audit and other services**

## 6. Fees for audit and other services

### Fees for work as the Council's appointed auditor

- Details of the 201/22 Actual and indicative 2022/23 Audit fees in line with PSAA and other reporting mechanisms are set out below:

Area of work	2022/23 Proposed Fee	2021/22 Actual Fee
Scale fee in respect of our work under the Code of Audit Practice	55,849	43,148
Additional cost in respect of increased regulatory expectations :		
Additional testing on IAS19 Pension Liabilities	N/a, included in scale fees	3,740
Additional testing on valuation of land, buildings, dwellings, and investment properties	N/a, included in scale fees	6,200
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>55,849</b>	<b>53,088</b>
Additional work from the introduction of new auditing standards (ISA540 Estimates)	3,590	3,590
Additional work from the introduction of new auditing standards (ISA315 per Appendix B)	TBC	-
Other additional testing - audit adjustments to resolve prior period errors	-	2,205
Other additional testing - implications of pension fund surpluses under IAS19 and IFRIC 14	TBC	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>TBC</b>	<b>5,795</b>
Additional fees in respect of the VFM approach	TBC	6,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>TBC</b>	<b>64,883</b>

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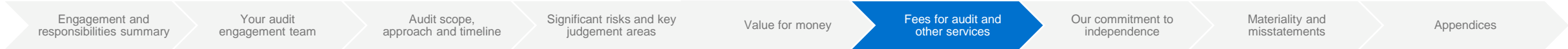
Appendices

# 6. Fees for audit and other services

## Fees for non-PSAA work

In addition to the fees outlined on the previous page in relation to our appointment by PSAA, we expect to be separately engaged by the Council to carry out additional work as set out in the table below. Before agreeing to undertake any additional work we consider whether there are any actual, potential or perceived threats to our independence. Further information about our responsibilities in relation to independence is provided in section 7.

Area of work	2022/23 Proposed Fee	2021/22 Actual Fee
Assurance Services – Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts	TBC – estimated as £3,750	3,650



# 07

Section 07:

**Our commitment to independence**

# 7. Our commitment to independence

We are committed to independence and are required by the Financial Reporting Council to confirm to you at least annually in writing that we comply with the FRC's Ethical Standard. In addition, we communicate any matters or relationship which we believe may have a bearing on our independence or the objectivity of the audit team.

Based on the information provided by you and our own internal procedures to safeguard our independence as auditors, we confirm that in our professional judgement there are no relationships between us and any of our related or subsidiary entities, and you and your related entities creating any unacceptable threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

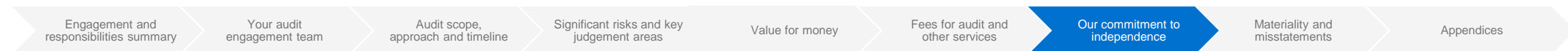
We have policies and procedures in place which are designed to ensure that we carry out our work with integrity, objectivity and independence. These policies include:

- all partners and staff are required to complete an annual independence declaration;
- all new partners and staff are required to complete an independence confirmation and also complete computer based ethical training;
- rotation policies covering audit engagement partners and other key members of the audit team; and
- use by managers and partners of our client and engagement acceptance system which requires all non-audit services to be approved in advance by the audit engagement partner.

We confirm, as at the date of this document, that the engagement team and others in the firm as appropriate, Mazars LLP and, when applicable, Mazars' member firms are independent and comply with relevant ethical requirements. However, if at any time you have concerns or questions about our integrity, objectivity or independence please discuss these with Mark Surrige in the first instance.

Prior to the provision of any non-audit services Mark Surrige will undertake appropriate procedures to consider and fully assess the impact that providing the service may have on our auditor independence.

Any emerging independence threats and associated identified safeguards will be communicated in our Audit Completion Report.



# 08

Section 08:

**Materiality and misstatements**



# 8. Materiality and misstatements

## Summary of initial materiality thresholds

Threshold	Initial threshold £'000s
Overall materiality	1,546
Performance materiality	1,159
Trivial threshold for errors to be reported to the Audit Committee	46
Specific materiality: Senior Officer Remuneration	£10,000

## Materiality

Materiality is an expression of the relative significance or importance of a particular matter in the context of financial statements as a whole.

Information is considered to be material if omitting, misstating or obscuring it could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions that the primary users of general purpose financial statements make on the basis of those financial statements, which provide financial information about a specific reporting entity.

Judgements on materiality are made in light of surrounding circumstances and are affected by the size and nature of a misstatement, or a combination of both. Judgements about materiality are based on consideration of the common financial information needs of users as a group and not on specific individual users.

The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and is affected by our perception of the financial information needs of the users of the financial statements. In making our assessment we assume that users:

- have a reasonable knowledge of business, economic activities and accounts;
- have a willingness to study the information in the financial statements with reasonable diligence;

- understand that financial statements are prepared, presented and audited to levels of materiality;
- recognise the uncertainties inherent in the measurement of amounts based on the use of estimates, judgement and the consideration of future events; and
- will make reasonable economic decisions on the basis of the information in the financial statements.

We consider materiality whilst planning and performing our audit based on quantitative and qualitative factors.

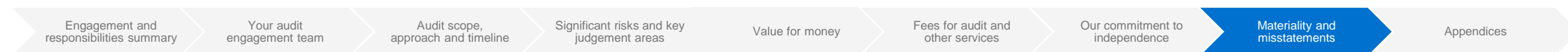
Whilst planning, we make judgements about the size of misstatements which we consider to be material and which provides a basis for determining the nature, timing and extent of risk assessment procedures, identifying and assessing the risk of material misstatement and determining the nature, timing and extent of further audit procedures.

The materiality determined at the planning stage does not necessarily establish an amount below which uncorrected misstatements, either individually or in aggregate, will be considered as immaterial.

We revise materiality for the financial statements as our audit progresses should we become aware of information that would have caused us to determine a different amount had we been aware of that information at the planning stage.

Our provisional materiality is set based on a benchmark of 2% of gross revenue expenditure. We will identify a figure for materiality but identify separate levels for procedures designed to detect individual errors, and also a level above which all identified errors will be reported to the Audit Committee.

We consider that the 2% of gross revenue expenditure remains the key focus of users of the financial statements and, as such, we base our materiality levels around this benchmark.



# 8. Materiality and misstatements

## Materiality (continued)

We expect to set a materiality threshold at 2% of gross revenue expenditure. Based on the 2021/22 audited financial statements we anticipate the overall materiality for the year ended 31 March 2023 to be in the region of £1.5m ( £1.7m in the prior year).

After setting initial materiality, we continue to monitor materiality throughout the audit to ensure that it is set at an appropriate level.

## Performance Materiality

Performance materiality is the amount or amounts set by the auditor at less than materiality for the financial statements as a whole to reduce, to an appropriately low level, the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the financial statements as a whole.

Our initial assessment of performance materiality is based on low inherent risk, meaning that we have applied 75% of overall materiality as performance materiality.

## Misstatements

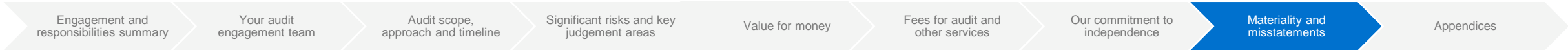
We accumulate misstatements identified during the audit that are other than clearly trivial. We set a level of triviality for individual errors identified (a reporting threshold) for reporting to the Audit Committee expect that the accumulation of such amounts would not have a material effect on the financial statements. Based on our

preliminary assessment of overall materiality, our proposed triviality threshold is £0.046m based on 3% of overall materiality. If you have any queries about this please do not hesitate to raise these with Mark Surridge.

## Reporting to the Audit Committee

The following three types of audit differences above the trivial threshold will be presented to the Audit Committee:

- summary of adjusted audit differences;
- summary of unadjusted audit differences; and
- summary of disclosure differences (adjusted and unadjusted).





# Appendices

A: Key communication points

B: Revised auditing standard on Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement: ISA (UK) 315 (Revised 2019)

# Appendix A: Key communication points

We value communication with Those Charged With Governance as a two way feedback process at the heart of our client service commitment. ISA 260 (UK) 'Communication with Those Charged with Governance' and ISA 265 (UK) 'Communicating Deficiencies In Internal Control To Those Charged With Governance And Management' specifically require us to communicate a number of points with you.

Relevant points that need to be communicated with you at each stage of the audit are outlined below.

## Form, timing and content of our communications

We will present the following reports:

- Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- Audit Completion Report; and
- Auditor's Annual Report

These documents will be discussed with management prior to being presented to yourselves and their comments will be incorporated as appropriate.

## Key communication points at the planning stage as included in this Audit Strategy Memorandum

- Our responsibilities in relation to the audit of the financial statements;
- The planned scope and timing of the audit;
- Significant audit risks and areas of management judgement;
- Our commitment to independence;

- Responsibilities for preventing and detecting errors;
- Materiality and misstatements; and
- Fees for audit and other services.

## Key communication points at the completion stage to be included in our Audit Completion Report

- Significant deficiencies in internal control;
- Significant findings from the audit;
- Significant matters discussed with management;
- Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit;
- Qualitative aspects of the entity's accounting practices, including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;
- Our conclusions on the significant audit risks and areas of management judgement;
- Summary of misstatements;
- Management representation letter;
- Our proposed draft audit report; and
- Independence.

Engagement and responsibilities summary

Your audit engagement team

Audit scope, approach and timeline

Significant risks and key judgement areas

Value for money

Fees for audit and other services

Our commitment to independence

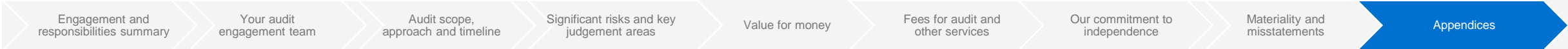
Materiality and misstatements

Appendices

# Appendix A: Key communication points

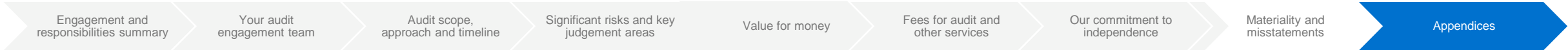
ISA (UK) 260 'Communication with Those Charged with Governance', ISA (UK) 265 'Communicating Deficiencies In Internal Control To Those Charged With Governance And Management' and other ISAs (UK) specifically require us to communicate the following:

Required communication	Where addressed
Our responsibilities in relation to the financial statement audit and those of management and those charged with governance.	Audit Strategy Memorandum
The planned scope and timing of the audit including any limitations, specifically including with respect to significant risks.	Audit Strategy Memorandum
With respect to misstatements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion;</li> <li>• the effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods;</li> <li>• a request that any uncorrected misstatement is corrected; and</li> <li>• in writing, corrected misstatements that are significant.</li> </ul>	Audit Completion Report
With respect to fraud communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enquiries of the Audit Committee to determine whether they have a knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity;</li> <li>• any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that fraud may exist; and</li> <li>• a discussion of any other matters related to fraud.</li> </ul>	Audit Completion Report and discussion at the Audit Committee, Audit planning and clearance meetings



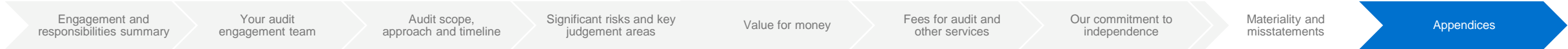
# Appendix A: Key communication points

Required communication	Where addressed
<p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity’s related parties including, when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-disclosure by management;</li> <li>• inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions;</li> <li>• disagreement over disclosures;</li> <li>• non-compliance with laws and regulations; and</li> <li>• difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity.</li> </ul>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>
<p>Significant findings from the audit including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;</li> <li>• significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit;</li> <li>• significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management or were the subject of correspondence with management;</li> <li>• written representations that we are seeking;</li> <li>• expected modifications to the audit report; and</li> <li>• other matters, if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process or otherwise identified in the course of the audit that we believe will be relevant to the Audit Committee in the context of fulfilling their responsibilities.</li> </ul>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>
<p>Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit.</p>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>
<p>Where relevant, any issues identified with respect to authority to obtain external confirmations or inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures.</p>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>



# Appendix A: Key communication points

Required communication	Where addressed
<p>Audit findings regarding non-compliance with laws and regulations where the non-compliance is material and believed to be intentional (subject to compliance with legislation on tipping off) and 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.</p>	<p>Audit Completion Report and the Audit Committee meetings</p>
<p>With respect to going concern, events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty;</li> <li>• whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements; and</li> <li>• the adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements.</li> </ul>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>
<p>Reporting on the valuation methods applied to the various items in the annual financial statements including any impact of changes of such methods</p>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>
<p>Indication of whether all requested explanations and documents were provided by the entity</p>	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>



# Appendix B: Revised auditing standard on Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement: ISA (UK) 315 (Revised 2019)

## Background

ISA (UK) 315 (Revised 2019) introduces major changes to the auditor's risk identification and assessment approach, which are intended to drive a more focused response from auditors undertaking work to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to address the risks of material misstatement. The new standard is effective for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2021 and therefore applies in full for the Council's 2022/23 audit.

The most significant changes relevant to the Council's audit are outlined below.

## Enhanced risk identification and assessment

The standard has enhanced the requirements for the auditor to understand the audited entity, its environment and the applicable financial reporting framework in order to identify and assess risk based on new inherent risk factors which include:

- Subjectivity
- Complexity
- Uncertainty and change
- Susceptibility to misstatement due to management bias or fraud.

Using these inherent risk factors, we assess inherent risk on a spectrum, at which the higher end of which lies significant risks, to drive an audit that is more focused on identified risks. Auditors are now also required to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence from these risk identification and assessment procedures which means documentation and evidence requirements are also enhanced.

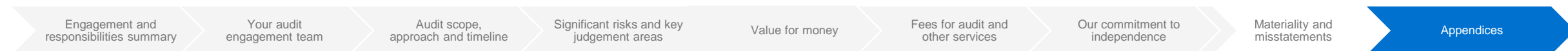
## Greater emphasis on understanding IT

In response to constantly evolving business environments, the standard places an increased emphasis on the requirements for the auditor to gain an understanding of the entity's IT environment to better understand the possible

risks within an entity's information systems. As a result, we are required to gain a greater understanding of the IT environment, including IT general controls (ITGCs).

## Increased focus on controls

Building on the need for auditors to gain a greater understanding of the IT environment, the standard also widens the scope of controls that are deemed relevant to the audit. We are now required to broaden our understanding of controls implemented by management, including ITGCs, as well as assess the design and implementation of those controls.





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