

Audit Strategy Memorandum

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Year ending 31 March 2022



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This document is to be regarded as confidential to City of Bradford Metropolitan Council. It has been prepared for the sole use of Governance and 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.



Governance and Audit Committee
City of Bradford Metropolitan Council
City Hall
Bradford
BD1 1UH

May 2022

Dear Governance and Audit Committee Members

Audit Strategy Memorandum – Year ending 31 March 2022

We are pleased to present our Audit Strategy Memorandum for City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council for the year ending 31 March 2022. 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 City of Bradford Metropolitan 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.

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 0781 375 2053.

Yours faithfully

Cameron Waddell
Mazars LLP

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Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an integrated international advisory and accountancy organisation. Mazars LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC308299 and with its registered office at Tower Bridge House, St Katharine's Way, London E1W 1DD.

We are registered to carry on audit work in the UK by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Details about our audit registration can be viewed at www.auditregister.org.uk under reference number C001139861. VAT number: 839 8356 73

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Section 01:

Engagement and responsibilities summary

1. Engagement and responsibilities summary

Overview of engagement

We are appointed to perform the external audit of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (the Council) for the year to 31 March 2022. 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.

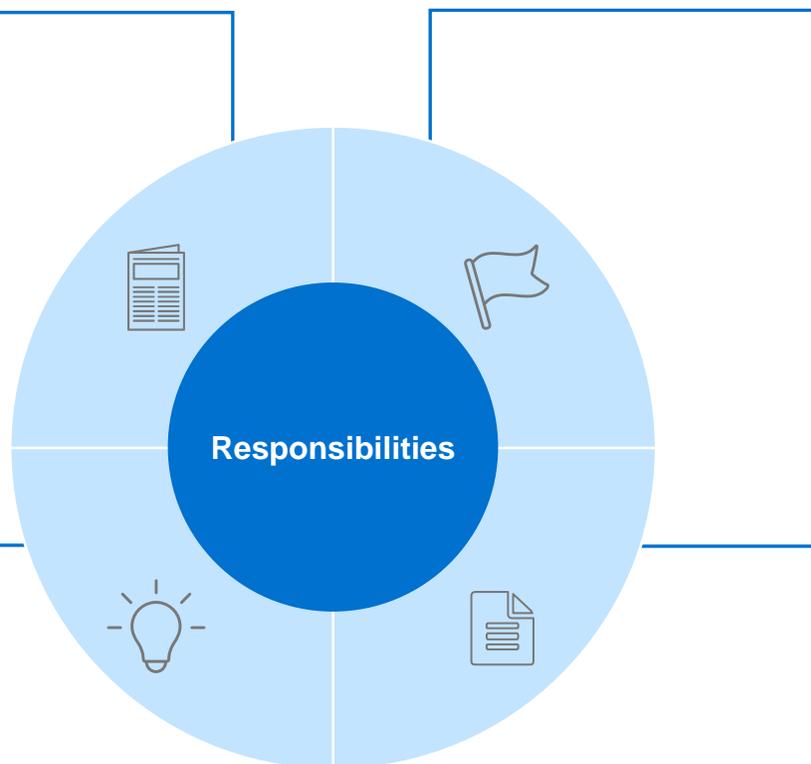
Audit opinion

We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements. Our audit does not relieve management or Governance and 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

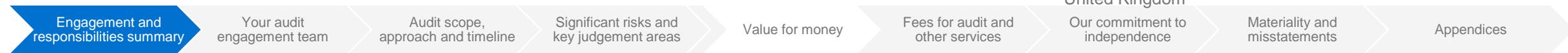
The responsibility for safeguarding assets and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with both those charged with governance and management. This includes establishing and maintaining internal controls over reliability of financial reporting.

As part of our audit procedures in relation to fraud we are required to enquire of those charged with governance, management, Internal audit and other key individuals 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

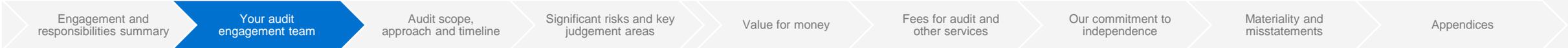
Section 02:

Your audit engagement team

2. Your audit engagement team

Your external audit service will be led by Cameron Waddell.

Who	Role	E-mail
Cameron Waddell	Engagement Lead	cameron.waddell@mazars.co.uk
Mark Outterside	Engagement Manager	mark.outterside@mazars.co.uk
Keith Illingworth	Engagement team leader	keith.illingworth@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 this assessment.

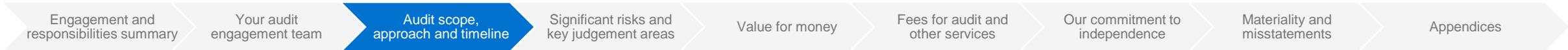
If we conclude that appropriately-designed controls are in place then we may plan to test and rely upon these controls. If we decide controls are not appropriately designed, or we decide it would be more efficient to do so, we may take a wholly substantive approach to our audit testing. Substantive procedures are audit procedures designed to detect material misstatements at the assertion level and comprise of:

- 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 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.



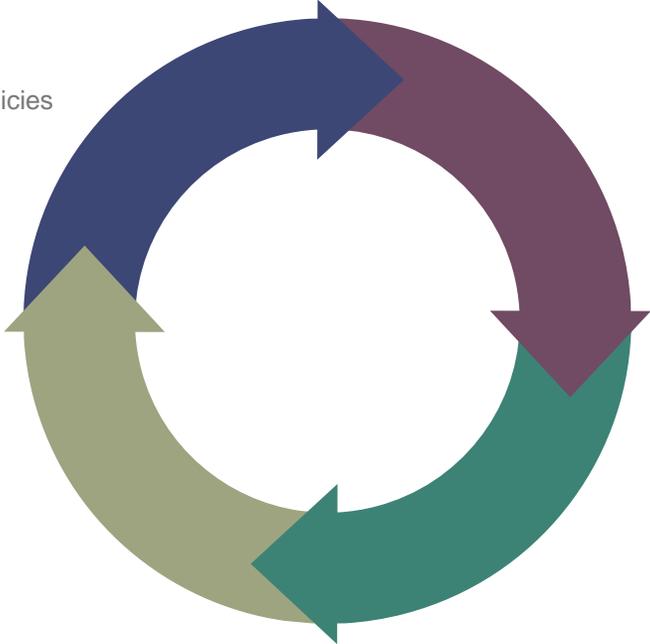
3. Audit scope, approach and timeline

Planning (March/April)

- 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
- Preliminary analytical review

Completion (November)

- Clearance meeting
- Final review of financial statements
- Final partner review
- Agreeing content of letter of representation
- Reporting to the Audit and Governance Committee
- Reviewing subsequent events
- Signing the auditor's report

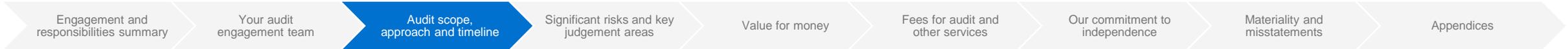


Interim and early testing (March/April and June)

- Documenting systems and controls
- Performing walkthroughs
- Early substantive testing of transactions
- Reassessment of audit plan and revision if necessary
- Early discussions with Mazars valuations team

Fieldwork (September to November)

- Receiving and reviewing draft financial statements
- Reassessment of audit plan and revision if necessary
- Executing the strategy starting with significant risks and high risk areas
- Communicating progress and issues



3. Audit scope, approach and timeline

Management's and our experts

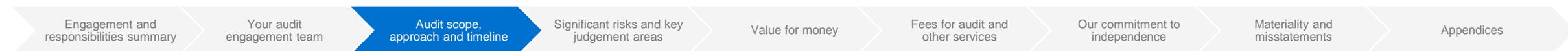
Management makes use of experts in specific areas when preparing the Council's financial statements. We also use experts to assist us to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence on specific items of account.

Item of account	Management's expert	Our expert
Defined benefit liability	AON Hewitt	PwC, consulting actuary, on behalf of National Audit Office.
Property, plant and equipment valuation	Council's valuer	We have engaged the Mazars Real Estates Valuation Team to review the valuation methodology applied by the Council's valuer.
Financial instrument disclosures	Link Asset Services	The audit team will review Link Asset Services' methodology to gain assurance that the fair value disclosures of the Council's financial assets and liabilities are materially accurate.

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 are aware of one service organisation arrangement at the Council.

Items of account	Service organisation	Audit approach
School's payroll	Data-plan and Working for Schools. These are the two material providers.	Sufficient appropriate audit evidence is held at schools for us to substantively test schools' external payroll without contacting the service organisations.



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

A significant risk is an identified and assessed risk of material misstatement that, in the auditor's judgment, requires special audit consideration. For any significant risk, the auditor shall obtain an understanding of the entity's controls, including control activities relevant to that risk.

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:

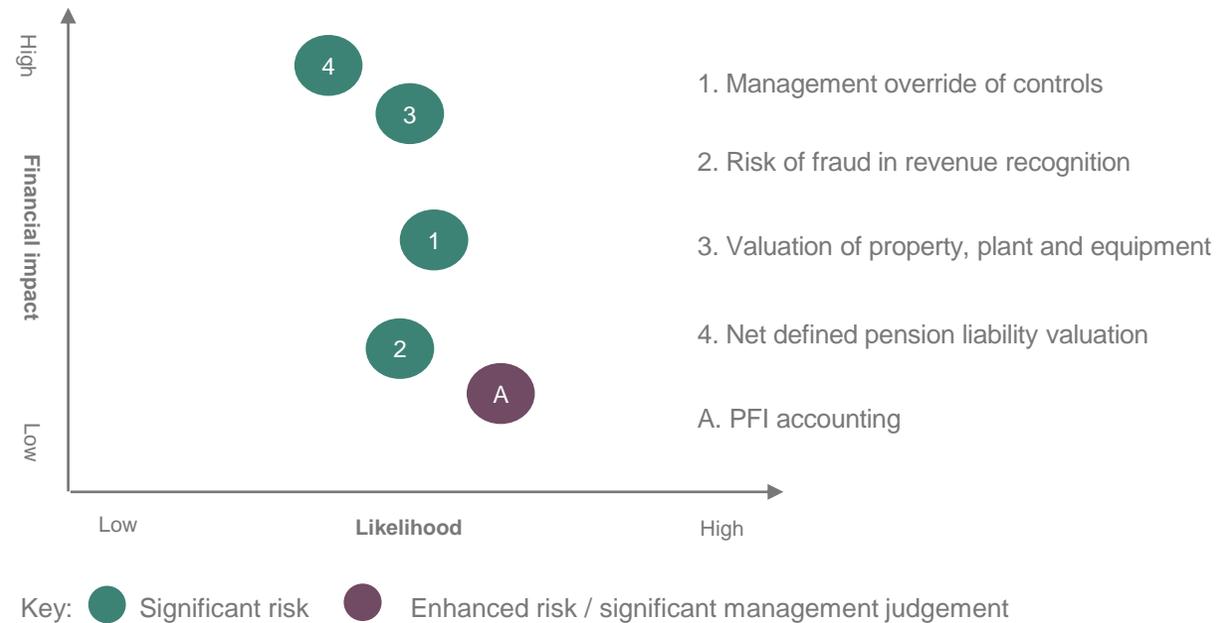
- key areas of management judgement, including accounting estimates which are material but are not considered to give rise to a significant risk of material misstatement; and
- other audit assertion risks arising from significant events or transactions that occurred during the period.

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.



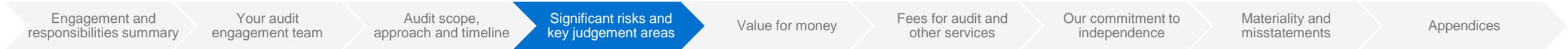
4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

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 Audit and Governance Committee.

Significant risks

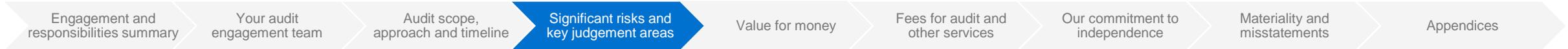
	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
1	<p>Management override of controls This is a mandatory significant risk on all audits due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur.</p> <p>Management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Because of 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 by performing audit work on 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

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
2	<p>Revenue recognition</p> <p>In accordance with ISA 240 we presume there is a risk of fraud in respect of the recognition of revenue because of the potential for inappropriate recording of transactions in the wrong period. ISA 240 allows the presumption to be rebutted but, given the Council’s range of revenue sources, we have concluded that there are insufficient grounds for rebuttal for all income streams in 2021/22. We have identified cut off and income from fees and charges, as the key area for audit testing.</p> <p>This does not imply that we suspect actual or intended manipulation but that we continue to deliver our audit work with appropriate professional scepticism.</p>	●	●	●	<p>We plan to address this risk through a range of substantive procedures including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • testing revenue items recorded around year end to ensure they have been recognised in the appropriate year; • testing year end receivables; and • obtaining direct confirmations of year-end bank balances and testing the reconciliations to the ledger.



4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Other key areas of management judgement and enhanced risks

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
3	<p>Valuation of land and buildings Council dwellings, infrastructure assets, other land and buildings were the Council's highest value assets totalling £826.0 million (£835.2 million in 2020/21). The balance sheet also included investment properties totalling £46.1 million (£54.6 million in 2020/21).</p> <p>Per the CIPFA Code, each of these class of asset requires that where assets are subject to revaluation, their year end carrying value should reflect the appropriate fair value at that date.</p> <p>Management engages its own Valuer as an expert to assist in determining the fair value of land and buildings to be included in the financial statements but there remains a high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with the valuation of land and buildings due to the significant judgements and number of variables involved.</p>	○	●	●	<p>We will evaluate the design and implementation of any controls which mitigate the risk. This includes liaising with management to update our understanding on the approach taken by the Council in its valuation of land and buildings. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the scope and terms of engagement with the Valuer; • assess the competence, skills and objectivity of the Valuer; • assess how management use the Valuer's report to value land and buildings included in the financial statements; • test the accuracy of the data used in valuations; • challenge the Council and Valuer's assumptions and judgements applied in the valuations; • review valuation methodology used, including the appropriateness of the valuation basis; and • consider the reasonableness of the valuation by comparing the valuation output with market intelligence. <p>We have also engaged the Mazars Real Estates Valuation team to assist in the above.</p>

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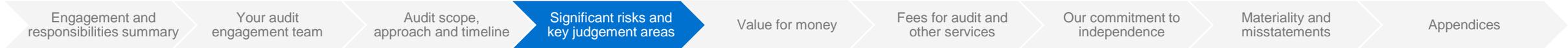
Materiality and misstatements

Appendices

4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Other key areas of management judgement and enhanced risks

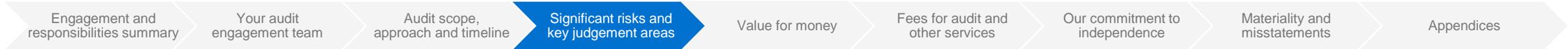
	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
4	<p>Net defined benefit liability valuation</p> <p>The financial statements contain material pension entries in respect of the retirement benefits. The calculation of these pension figures, both assets and liabilities, can be subject to significant volatility and includes estimates based upon a complex interaction of actuarial assumptions. This results in an increased risk of material misstatement.</p>	○	●	●	<p>We plan to address the risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critically assessing the competency, objectivity and independence of the West Yorkshire Pension Fund’s Actuary; liaising with the auditors of the West Yorkshire Pension Fund to gain assurance over the design and implementation of controls in place at the 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; reviewing the appropriateness of the Pension Asset and Liability valuation methodologies applied by the Pension Fund Actuary, and the key assumptions included within the valuation. This will include comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information by the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office; and agreeing the data in the IAS 19 valuation report provided by the Fund Actuary for accounting purposes to the pension accounting entries and disclosures in the Council’s financial statements.



4. Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Other key areas of management judgement and enhanced risks

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
A	<p>PFI accounting The method of accounting for PFI assets can be complex and involve management judgement.</p> <p>Therefore there is a potential risk of material misstatement if the Council fails to appropriately apply judgement and update their accounting model.</p>	○	●	●	We will review the Council's adopted approach for accounting for its PFI assets including reviewing any changes to the long term financial model used.



05

Section 05:

Value for money

5. Value for money arrangements

The framework for our 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.

2021/22 will be the second 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	<p>Obtaining an understanding of the Council’s arrangements for each specified reporting criteria. Relevant information sources will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; and • discussions with officers and Members.
Additional risk based procedures and evaluation	<p>Where our planning work identifies risks of significant weaknesses, we will undertake additional procedures to determine whether there is a significant weakness.</p>
Reporting	<p>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.</p> <p>Our commentary will also highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant weaknesses identified and our recommendations for improvement; and • emerging issues or other matters that do not represent significant weaknesses but still require attention from the Council.

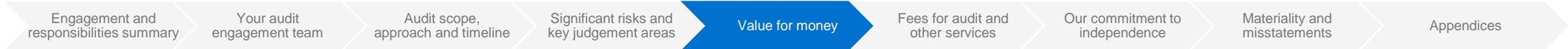


5. Value for money arrangements

Identified risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements

The NAO's guidance requires us to carry out work at the planning stage to understand the Council's arrangements and to identify risks that significant weaknesses in arrangements may exist.

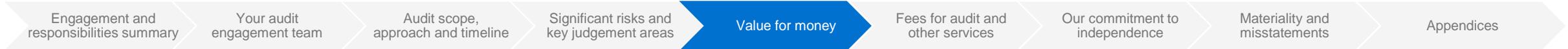
Although we have not fully completed our planning and risk assessment work, as part of our 2020/21 audit, we identified significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements. The table overleaf sets out the significant weakness identified, our previous recommendations and the work we intend to carry out as part of our 2021/22 audit. We will report any further identified risks to the Governance and Audit Committee on completion of our planning and risk identification work.



5. Value for money arrangements

Our work to follow-up on previous recommendations

Previously identified significant weakness in arrangements	Relevant reporting criteria	Our 2020/21 recommendations
<p>Progress in addressing weaknesses identified by Ofsted’s 2018 inspection of Children’s Services</p> <p>In 2018 Ofsted assessed children’s services as ‘Inadequate’. In response to Ofsted’s recommendations, the Council developed an action plan to address the issues highlighted by Ofsted.</p> <p>Since the 2018 visit, Ofsted has made several follow-up monitoring visits, and issued Monitoring Letters, summarising their views on progress to-date. In December 2020 Ofsted undertook a focused visit, (reported in February 2021) and shortly after completed a further monitoring visit in April 2021 (reported in June 2021). Ofsted’s Monitoring Letters, issued after these visits, highlighted that whilst the Council had made improvements, concerns remained about the pace of improvement since they issued their 2018 inspection report. In particular, Ofsted recommended that the Council needed to improve in the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workforce challenges, including oversight and workforce instability; • poor working practices, including high caseloads and ineffective planning; and • effectiveness of corporate parenting. <p>In our view, Ofsted’s concerns around the Council’s progress in addressing the identified weaknesses in children’s services represent a significant weakness in arrangements in relation to Governance and how the Council implements or achieves progress on recommendations raised as a result of previous recommendations from Ofsted.</p> <p>The Council recognises that the ongoing a failure to fully address the weaknesses identified in the 2018 Ofsted report and subsequent Monitoring Letters adversely impacts upon the quality of services provided to service users and may lead to further action by regulators.</p>	<p>Governance</p>	<p>In order to fully address ongoing concerns expressed by Ofsted in its 2018 Report and subsequent Monitoring Letters, the Council should continue to improve its arrangements and action plan.</p> <p>The Council should also ensure that robust monitoring and reporting processes are in place and that challenge, scrutiny and escalation arrangements drive the required improvements for service users and sustain the progress made to-date in implementing the actions to address the issues raised by Ofsted.</p>



5. Value for money arrangements

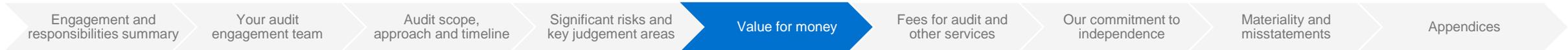
Our work to follow-up on previous recommendations

Planned procedures for 2021/22

In January 2022, following recommendations made by the Children’s Services Commissioner the Council has announced that it plans to establish a Trust to run services for vulnerable children and families. The intention is that this will be a not-for-profit Trust, which will be owned by the Council and operate at arms-length under the control of a new independent Chair and Board of Directors.

As part of our 2021/22 audit, we will follow up the Council’s progress in implementing arrangements to address the weaknesses and recommendations made by Ofsted and, more recently, by the Children’s Services Commissioner. Our work will include, but is not limited to:

- discussions with senior management;
- review of reports and minutes;
- review of action plans put in place to address the weaknesses identified by Ofsted and the Children’s Services Commissioner;
- considering progress made by the Council to date in addressing the weaknesses identified, including the establishment of the proposed Trust; and
- where available, consider any updates provided directly from Ofsted and/or the Children’s Services Commissioner.



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

The table below confirms the 2021/22 scale fee and 2020/21 fee variations submitted to the Public Service Auditor Appointments (PSAA) for recurring and non-recurring work.

Area of work	2021/22 Proposed Fee	2020/21 Actual Fee
Scale fee in respect of our work under the Code of Audit Practice.	£142,694	£142,694
Additional testing on pension valuations and property valuations	TBC*	£19,865
Increased FRC scrutiny – additional level of review for major local audit.	TBC*	£2,965
Additional fees in respect of the new VFM approach and identified significant weaknesses in arrangements.	TBC*	£19,880
Additional fees in respect of the additional requirements of ISA (UK) 540 (Revised) – auditing accounting estimates and related disclosures.	TBC*	£2,145
Total	TBC	£187,569

* Recurring work will incur fee variations in 2021/22, however we require approval of the 2020/21 fees before these can be confirmed.

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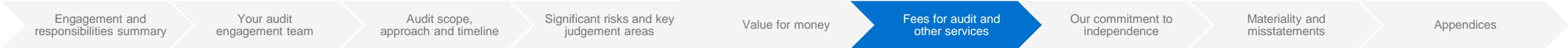
6. Fees for audit and other services

Fees for non-PSAA work

In addition to the fees outlined above in relation to our appointment by PSAA, we have been 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	2021/22 Proposed Fee	2020/21 Actual Fee
Other services - Housing Benefits Subsidy Assurance*	TBC	£9,210

**Subject to our engagement*



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:

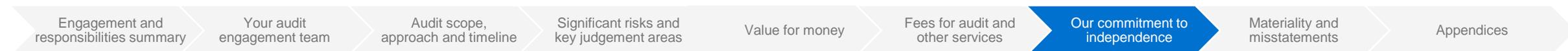
- all partners and staff are required to complete an annual independence declaration;
- all new partners and staff are required to complete an independence confirmation and also complete computer based ethical training;
- rotation policies covering audit engagement partners and other key members of the 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 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 Cameron Waddell in the first instance.

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

As at the time of writing this report, no threats to our independence have been identified.

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	£23,500
Performance materiality	£17,625
Trivial threshold for errors to be reported to Governance and Audit Committee	£705

Materiality

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

Misstatements in financial statements are considered to be material if they, individually or in aggregate, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

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.

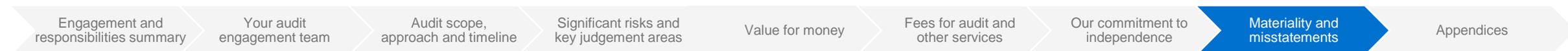
Whilst planning, we make judgements about the size of misstatements which we consider to be material and which provides a basis for determining the nature, timing and extent of risk assessment procedures, identifying and assessing the risk of material misstatement and determining the nature, timing and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

We consider that the gross 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 expenditure. Based on the 2020/21 financial statements we anticipate the overall materiality for the year ending 31 March 2022 to be in the region of £23.5m (£23.5m 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.

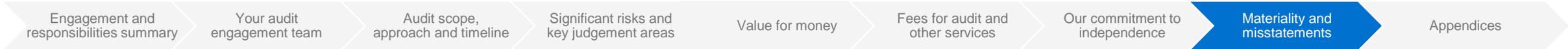
Misstatements

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 Governance and Audit Committee that is consistent with the level of triviality that we consider would not need to be accumulated because we 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 £705k based on 3% of overall materiality. If you have any queries about this please do not hesitate to raise these with Cameron Waddell.

Reporting to Governance and Audit Committee

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

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





Appendix: Key communication points

Appendix: 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.

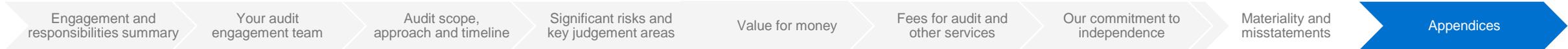
Key communication points at the planning stage as included in this Audit Strategy Memorandum

- 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

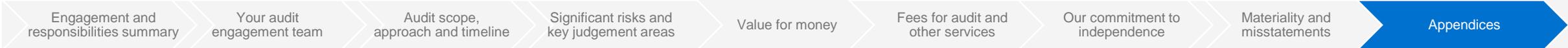
- Significant deficiencies in internal control;
- Significant findings from the audit;
- Significant matters discussed with management;
- Our conclusions on the significant audit risks and areas of management judgement;
- Summary of misstatements;
- Management representation letter;
- Our proposed draft audit report; and
- Independence.



Appendix: Key communication points

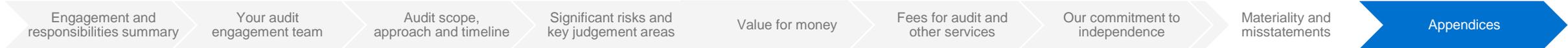
ISA (UK) 260 'Communication with Those Charged with Governance', ISA (UK) 265 'Communicating Deficiencies In Internal Control To Those Charged With Governance And Management' and other ISAs (UK) specifically require us to communicate the following:

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"> • uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion; • the effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods; • a request that any uncorrected misstatement is corrected; and • in writing, corrected misstatements that are significant. 	Audit Completion Report
With respect to fraud communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enquiries of Governance and Audit Committee to determine whether they have a knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity; • any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that fraud may exist; and • a discussion of any other matters related to fraud. 	Audit Completion Report and discussion at Governance and Audit Committee, Audit planning and clearance meetings



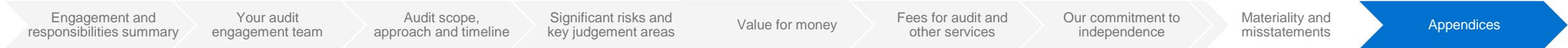
Appendix: Key communication points

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"> • non-disclosure by management; • inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions; • disagreement over disclosures; • non-compliance with laws and regulations; and • difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity. 	<p>Audit Completion Report</p>
<p>Significant findings from the audit including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures; • significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit; • significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management or were the subject of correspondence with management; • written representations that we are seeking; • expected modifications to the audit report; and • 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 Governance and Audit Committee in the context of fulfilling their responsibilities. 	<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: 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 Governance and Audit Committee into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that Governance and Audit Committee may be aware of.</p>	<p>Audit Completion Report and Governance and 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"> • whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty; • whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements; and • the adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements. 	<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>



Cameron Waddell - Partner

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Mazars is an internationally integrated partnership, specialising in audit, accountancy, advisory, tax and legal services*. Operating in over 90 countries and territories around the world, we draw on the expertise of 40,400 professionals – 24,400 in Mazars' integrated partnership and 16,000 via the Mazars North America Alliance – to assist clients of all sizes at every stage in their development.

*where permitted under applicable country laws.