

2022 Audit Plan – Education through Regional Working Joint Committee

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Contents

2022 Audit Plan	
About this document	4
My duties	4
Impact of COVID-19	4
Our duties	4
Audit of financial statements	4
Statutory audit functions	7
Fee, audit team and timetable	7

2022 Audit Plan

About this document

- 1 This document sets out the work I plan to undertake during 2022 and 2023 to discharge my statutory responsibilities as your external auditor and to fulfil my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice.

My duties

- 2 I complete work each year to meet the following duties.

Audit of financial statements

- 3 Each year I audit the Education through Regional Working Joint Committee's (the Joint Committee) financial statements to make sure that public money is being properly accounted for.

Value for money

- 4 The Joint Committee has to put in place arrangements to get value for money for the resources it uses, and I have to be satisfied that it has done this.

Impact of COVID-19

- 5 The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the United Kingdom and the work of public sector organisations.
- 6 While Wales is currently at Coronavirus Alert Level 0, Audit Wales will continue to monitor the position and will discuss the implications of any changes in the position with your officers.

Audit of financial statements

- 7 It is my responsibility to issue a certificate and report on the financial statements. This includes:
 - an opinion on the on the 'truth and fairness' of the Joint Committee's financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2022; and
 - an assessment as to whether the Joint Committee's Narrative Report and Annual Governance Statement is prepared in line with the CIPFA Code and relevant guidance and is consistent with the financial statements and with my knowledge of the Joint Committee.
- 8 I do not seek to obtain absolute assurance on the truth and fairness of the financial statements and related notes but adopt a concept of materiality. My aim is to identify material misstatements, that is, those that might result in a reader of the

accounts being misled. The levels at which I judge such misstatements to be material will be reported to the Joint Committee prior to completion of the audit.

- 9 Any misstatements below a trivial level (set at 5% of materiality) I judge as not requiring consideration by those charged with governance and therefore will not report them.
- 10 There have been no limitations imposed on me in planning the scope of this audit.
- 11 I will also report by exception on a number of matters which are set out in more detail in our [Statement of Responsibilities](#), along with further information about my work.

Audit of financial statements risks

- 12 The following table sets out the significant risks I have identified for the audit of the Joint Committee.

Exhibit 1: financial statement audit risks

This table summarises the key financial statement audit risks identified at the planning stage of the audit.

Audit risk	Proposed audit response
Significant risks	
<p>The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk [ISA 240.31-33].</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • test the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements; • review accounting estimates for biases; • evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business;
<p>Cessation of the Joint Committee. ERW ceased on 31 March 2022 and was replaced by “Partneriaeth’ comprising three local authorities - Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County</p>	<p>My audit team will ensure that appropriate disclosures are included in the financial statements which reference the future direction of the joint committee.</p>

Audit risk	Proposed audit response
<p>Council and the City and County of Swansea Council from 1 April 2022. We would expect appropriate disclosures to be made in the financial statements bringing these matters to the attention of the reader.</p>	
<p>Closedown arrangements – quality of the financial statements</p> <p>In 2020-21 we reported that there were delays in providing responses to audit queries which resulted in were significant delays in issuing the audit opinion. This , alongside the legacy impact of the COVID 19 national emergency and the state of flux of ERW governance arrangements and structure and pressures on staff resource may impact on the preparation, audit and publication of accounts.</p> <p>There is a risk that the quality of the accounts and supporting working papers, particularly around estimates, may be compromised leading to an increased incidence of errors. Quality monitoring arrangements may be compromised due to timing issues and resource availability.</p>	<p>My audit team will discuss the closedown process and quality monitoring arrangements with the accounts preparation team and make arrangements to monitor the accounts preparation process. We will help to identify areas where there may be gaps in arrangements.</p>
<p>Pembrokeshire CC has implemented a new ledger system that went live on 1 September 2021 which is five months into the 2021-22 financial year.</p> <p>Therefore, there is a risk in relation to the implementation of the ledger in ensuring the accuracy and completeness of balances and transactions transferred into the new system and any new associated subsidiary systems.</p>	<p>We will liaise with the external audit team of Pembrokeshire CC to obtain assurance over transfer of new balances and controls over the new systems that are relevant to ERW for 2021-22.</p>

Statutory audit functions

- 13 In addition to the audit of the accounts, I have statutory responsibilities to receive questions and objections to the accounts from local electors. These responsibilities are set out in the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004:
- Section 30 Inspection of documents and questions at audit; and
 - Section 31 Right to make objections at audit.
- 14 As this work is reactive, I have made no allowance in the fee table below. If I do receive questions or objections, I will discuss potential audit fees at the time.

Fee, audit team and timetable

- 15 My fees and planned timescales for completion of the audit are based on the following assumptions
- the financial statements are provided in accordance with a timescale to be agreed taking into account the impact of COVID-19, to the quality expected and have been subject to a robust quality assurance review;
 - information provided to support the financial statements is in accordance with the agreed audit deliverables document;
 - appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided to enable my audit team to deliver the audit in an efficient manner;
 - all appropriate officials will be available during the audit;
 - you have all the necessary controls and checks in place to enable the Responsible Financial Officer to provide all the assurances that I require in the Letter of Representation addressed to me;
 - Internal Audit's planned programme of work is complete and management has responded to issues that may have affected the financial statements; and
- 16 If I do receive questions or objections, I will discuss potential audit fees at the time.

Fee

- 17 As set out in our Fee Scheme 2022-23 our fee rates for 2022-23 have increased by 3.7% as a result of the need to continually invest in audit quality and in response to increasing cost pressures.
- 18 The estimated fee for 2022 is set out in Exhibit 2. This represents a 4.3% increase compared to your actual 2021 fee.

Exhibit 2: audit fee

This table sets out the proposed audit fee for 2022, by area of audit work, alongside the actual audit fee for last year.

Audit area	Proposed fee (£) ¹	Actual fee last year (£)
Audit of accounts	15,500	14,850
Total fee	15,500	14,850

- 19 Planning will be ongoing, and changes to my programme of audit work, and therefore my fee, may be required if any key new risks emerge. I shall make no changes without first discussing them with Joint Committee.
- 20 Further information can be found in my [Fee Scheme 2022-23](#).

Audit team

- 21 The main members of my team, together with their contact details, are summarised in **Exhibit 3**.

Exhibit 3: my audit team

This table lists the members of the local audit team and their contact details.

Name	Role	Contact number	E-mail address
Richard Harries	Engagement Director	029 20320640	richard.harries@audit.wales
Jeremy Saunders	Audit Manager	029 20829329	jeremy.saunders@audit.wales
Julie Owens	Senior Auditor	029 20829392	julie.owens@audit.wales

- 22 We can confirm that team members are all independent of you and your officers.
Timetable

¹ Notes: The fees shown in this document are exclusive of VAT, which is not charged to you.

- 23 The key milestones for the work set out in this plan are shown in **Exhibit 4**.
- 24 The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 provides electors with the right to ask questions and to make objections to the Authority's accounts to the Auditor General. The rights to ask questions and make objections at audit are linked to electors' rights to inspect the accounts that are also set out in the 2004 Act.

Exhibit 4: audit timetable

Planned output	Work undertaken	Report finalised
2022 Audit Plan	December 2022	January 2023
Audit of Financial statements work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of Financial Statements Report • Opinion on Financial Statements 	January 2023	February 2023



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