



cutting through complexity

Report to those charged with governance (ISA 260) 2014/15

Wyre Borough Borough Council

22 September 2015

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This report is addressed to the Authority and has been prepared for the sole use of the Authority. We take no responsibility to any member of staff acting in their individual capacities, or to third parties. The Audit Commission issued a document entitled Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies summarising where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from audited bodies. We draw your attention to this document which is available on Public Sector Audit Appointment's website (www.psa.co.uk).

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

We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If you have any concerns or are dissatisfied with any part of KPMG's work, in the first instance you should contact Tim Cutler, the engagement lead to the Authority, who will try to resolve your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with your response please contact the national lead partner for all of KPMG's work under our contract with Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, Trevor Rees (on 0161 246 4000, or by email to trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk). After this, if you are still dissatisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can access PSA's complaints procedure by emailing generalenquiries@psaa.co.uk, by telephoning 020 7072 7445 or by writing to Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, 3rd Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

This document summarises:

- the key issues identified during our audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2015 for the Authority; and
- our assessment of the Authority's arrangements to secure value for money.

Scope of this report

This report summarises the key findings arising from:

- our audit work at Wyre Borough Council ('the Authority') in relation to the Authority's 2014/15 financial statements; and
- the work to support our 2014/15 conclusion on the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources ('VFM conclusion').

Financial statements

Our *External Audit Plan 2014/15*, presented to you in March 2015, set out the four stages of our financial statements audit process.



This report focuses on the third stage of the process: substantive procedures. Our on site work for this took place during July 2015.

We are now in the final phase of the audit, the completion stage. Some aspects of this stage are also discharged through this report.

VFM conclusion

Our *External Audit Plan 2014/15* explained our risk-based approach to VFM work. We have now completed the work to support our 2014/15 VFM conclusion. This included:

- assessing the potential VFM risks and identifying the residual audit risks for our VFM conclusion; and
- considering the results of any relevant work by the Authority and other inspectorates and review agencies in relation to these risk areas.

Structure of this report

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 summarises the headline messages.
- Section 3 sets out our key findings from our audit work in relation to the 2014/15 financial statements of the Authority.
- Section 4 outlines our key findings from our work on the VFM conclusion.

Our recommendations are included in Appendix 1. We have also reviewed your progress in implementing the prior recommendation and this is detailed in Appendix 2.

Acknowledgements

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

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

Proposed audit opinion	We anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's financial statements by 30 September 2015. We will also report that your Annual Governance Statement complies with guidance issued by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007.
Audit adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We have completed our audit of the financial statements. Our key findings are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There are no unadjusted audit differences. – We have agreed presentational changes to the accounts with the Finance Team.
Key financial statements audit risks	<p>We review risks to the financial statements on an ongoing basis. We identified the following key financial statements audit risk in our 14/15 External audit plan issued in March 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coast protection scheme. <p>We have worked with officers throughout the year to discuss these key risks and our detailed findings are reported in section 3 of this report. There are no matters of any significance arising as a result of our audit work in these key risk areas.</p>

Accounts production and audit process	<p>The Authority has good processes in place for the production of the accounts and good quality supporting working papers. Officers dealt efficiently with audit queries and the audit process has been completed within the planned timescales.</p> <p>The Authority has implemented the recommendation in our <i>ISA 260 Report 2013/14</i> relating to the financial statements.</p>
Completion	<p>At the date of this report our audit of the financial statements is complete.</p> <p>Before we can issue our opinion we require a signed management representation letter.</p> <p>We confirm that we have complied with requirements on objectivity and independence in relation to this year's audit of the Authority's financial statements.</p>
VFM conclusion and risk areas	<p>We did not identify any VFM risks in our 2014/15 audit plan. Nevertheless we have maintained dialogue with officers throughout the year to identify any risks to the Authority's savings programme. There are no matters of any significance arising as result of our discussions.</p> <p>We have concluded that the Authority has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</p> <p>We therefore anticipate issuing an unqualified VFM conclusion by 30 September 2015.</p>



We have not identified any issues in the course of the audit that are considered to be material.

Proposed audit opinion

Subject to all outstanding queries being resolved to our satisfaction, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's financial statements following approval of the Statement of Accounts by the Audit Committee on 22 September 2015.

Audit differences

In accordance with ISA 260 we are required to report uncorrected audit differences to you. We also report any material misstatements which have been corrected and which we believe should be communicated to you to help you meet your governance responsibilities.

The final materiality (see Appendix 5 for more information on materiality) level for this year's audit was set at £1.1 million. Audit differences below £55k are not considered significant.

We did not identify any material misstatements.

Movements on the General Fund 2014/15		
£m	Pre-audit	Post-audit
Surplus on the provision of services	9.559	9.559
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under Regulations	(11.193)	(11.193)
Transfers from earmarked reserves	0.955	0.955
Decrease in General Fund	(0.679)	(0.679)

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2015		
£m	Pre-audit	Post-audit
Property, plant and equipment	77.811	77.811
Other long term assets	5.031	5.031
Current assets	20.450	20.450
Current liabilities	(7.596)	(7.596)
Long term liabilities	(49.754)	(49.754)
Net worth	45.942	45.942
General Fund	6.464	6.464
Other usable reserves	6.780	6.780
Unusable reserves	32.698	32.698
Total reserves	45.942	45.942

Financial Statements (continued)

Proposed opinion and audit differences

We anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion in relation to the Authority's financial statements by 30 September 2015.

The wording of your Annual Governance Statement complies with guidance issued by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007

In addition, we identified a small number of presentational adjustments required to ensure that the accounts are compliant with the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2014/15* (*'the Code'*). These amendments were in relation to the audit fee, related parties and plant, property and equipment.

We understand that the Authority has addressed these amendments.

Annual Governance Statement

We have reviewed the Annual Governance Statement and confirmed that:


- it complies with *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework* published by CIPFA/SOLACE; and
- it is not misleading or inconsistent with other information we are aware of from our audit of the financial statements.

The Annual Governance Statement is consistent with our understanding.

We have worked with the Authority throughout the year to discuss significant risks and key areas of audit focus



This section sets out our detailed findings on those risks

In our External Audit Plan 2014/15, presented to you in March 2015, we identified one significant risk affecting the Authority's 2014/15 financial statements. We have now completed our testing of this area and set out our evaluation following our substantive work below.

Significant audit risk	Issue	Findings
	<p>Risk</p> <p>The Authority is the administrating body for a significant £63.2m coast protection scheme at Rossall. The scheme is fully grant funded from the Environment Agency.</p> <p>The Authority's capital programme, approved by Cabinet in February 2014, shows that £14.6m has been budgeted for the scheme in 2014/15 and £16.1m in 2015/16. This is 62% and 92% of the Authority's total capital programme in each year respectively.</p> <p>The scheme therefore involves significant transactions for the Authority, and such schemes are often complex, time consuming and at risk of significant year on year slippage.</p> <p>Our proposed audit work</p> <p>We will review the accounting treatment of the grant receipts and capital additions in relation to the scheme to ensure they are in line with the SORP and any relevant grant conditions. In particular, we will consider the valuation basis for any material assets under construction and capital additions related to the scheme.</p>	<p>Initially the budget for the Rossall work was set at £14.687m. Slippage brought forward from 2013/14 increased this to £17.704m.</p> <p>At the quarter one capital review the budget was revised following information from the project manager to £14.289m. At the quarter three capital review it was agreed that £3.5m would be slipped to the final year of the scheme reducing the budget to £10.789m. This assumed that expenditure would catch up with the budget in the final quarter and included the full contingency/risk pot of £4.5m. However, the delays weren't recovered and therefore expenditure totalled £6.4m in 2014/15 in relation to the Rossall scheme.</p> <p>The slippage on this scheme has been transferred into future years to ensure that as and when risks materialise, the Authority has sufficient funding in place.</p> <p>The spend in year is shown within assets under construction on the fixed assets note in the financial statements. This is the correct accounting treatment for the asset at this stage.</p> <p>Funding is received in advance for this scheme based on estimated spend. The unspent capital grant at year end is included within creditors.</p>

In our *External Audit Plan 2014/15* we reported that we would consider two risk areas that are specifically required by professional standards and report our findings to you. These risk areas were Management override of controls and the Fraud risk of revenue recognition.

The table below sets out the outcome of our audit procedures and assessment on these risk areas.

Areas of significant risk	Summary of findings
 <p>Audit areas affected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All areas 	<p>Our audit methodology incorporates the risk of management override as a default significant risk. Management is typically in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. We have not identified any specific additional risks of management override relating to this audit.</p> <p>In line with our methodology, we carried out appropriate controls testing and substantive procedures, including over journal entries, accounting estimates and significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business, or are otherwise unusual.</p> <p>We did not identify any issues in relation to the journal review and authorisation process.</p>
 <p>Audit areas affected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None 	<p>Professional standards require us to make a rebuttable presumption that the fraud risk from revenue recognition is a significant risk.</p> <p>In our <i>External Audit Plan 2014/15</i> we reported that we do not consider this to be a significant risk for Local Authorities as there is unlikely to be an incentive to fraudulently recognise revenue.</p> <p>This is still the case. Since we have rebutted this presumed risk, there has been no impact on our audit work.</p>

Financial Statements (continued)

Accounts production and audit process

The Authority has a well established and a good accounts production process. This operated well in 2014/15, and the standard of accounts and supporting working papers was in line with previous years.

Officers dealt promptly and efficiently with audit queries and the audit process was completed within the planned timescales.

Accounts production and audit process

ISA 260 requires us to communicate to you our views about the significant qualitative aspects of the Authority's accounting practices and financial reporting. We also assessed the Authority's process for preparing the accounts and its support for an efficient audit.

We considered the following criteria:

Element	Commentary
Accounting practices and financial reporting	<p>The Authority continues to maintain a good financial reporting process and produce statements of accounts to a good standard.</p> <p>We consider that accounting practices are appropriate</p>
Completeness of draft accounts	<p>We received a complete set of draft accounts on 22 June 2015.</p>
Quality of supporting working papers	<p>We issued our <i>Accounts Audit Protocol</i> including our required working papers for the audit on 1 June 2015.</p> <p>The quality of working papers provided was good and in the main met the standards specified in our <i>Accounts Audit Protocol</i>.</p>
Response to audit queries	<p>Officers resolved all audit queries in a timely manner.</p>

Prior year recommendations

As part of our audit we have specifically followed up the Authority's progress in addressing the recommendation in last years ISA 260 report.

The Authority has fully implemented the recommendation.

Appendix 2 provides further details.

We confirm that we have complied with requirements on objectivity and independence in relation to this year's audit of the Authority's financial statements.

Before we can issue our opinion we require a signed management representation letter.

Once we have finalised our opinions and conclusions we will prepare our *Annual Audit Letter* and close our audit.

Declaration of independence and objectivity

As part of the finalisation process we are required to provide you with representations concerning our independence.

In relation to the audit of the financial statements of Wyre Borough Council for the year ending 31 March 2015, we confirm that there were no relationships between KPMG LLP and Wyre Borough Council, its directors and senior management and its affiliates that we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on the objectivity and independence of the audit engagement lead and audit staff. We also confirm that we have complied with Ethical Standards and the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd requirements in relation to independence and objectivity.

We have provided a detailed declaration in Appendix 4 in accordance with ISA 260.

Management representations

You are required to provide us with representations on specific matters such as your financial standing and whether the transactions within the accounts are legal and unaffected by fraud. We have provided a template to the Corporate Director of Resources (S151 Officer) for presentation to the Audit Committee. We require a signed copy of your management representations before we issue our audit opinion.

Other matters

ISA 260 requires us to communicate to you by exception 'audit matters of governance interest that arise from the audit of the financial statements' which include:

- significant difficulties encountered during the audit;
- significant matters arising from the audit that were discussed, or subject to correspondence with management;

- other matters, if arising from the audit that, in the auditor's professional judgment, are significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process; and
- matters specifically required by other auditing standards to be communicated to those charged with governance.

We have no such issues to report.

Our VFM conclusion considers how the Authority secures financial resilience and challenges how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

We have concluded that the Authority has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Background

Auditors are required to give their statutory VFM conclusion based on two criteria specified by the Audit Commission. These consider whether the Authority has proper arrangements in place for:

- securing financial resilience: looking at the Authority's financial governance, financial planning and financial control processes; and
- challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness: looking at how the Authority is prioritising resources and improving efficiency and productivity.

We follow a risk based approach to target audit effort on the areas of greatest audit risk. We consider the arrangements put in place by the Authority to mitigate these risks and plan our work accordingly.

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

Work completed

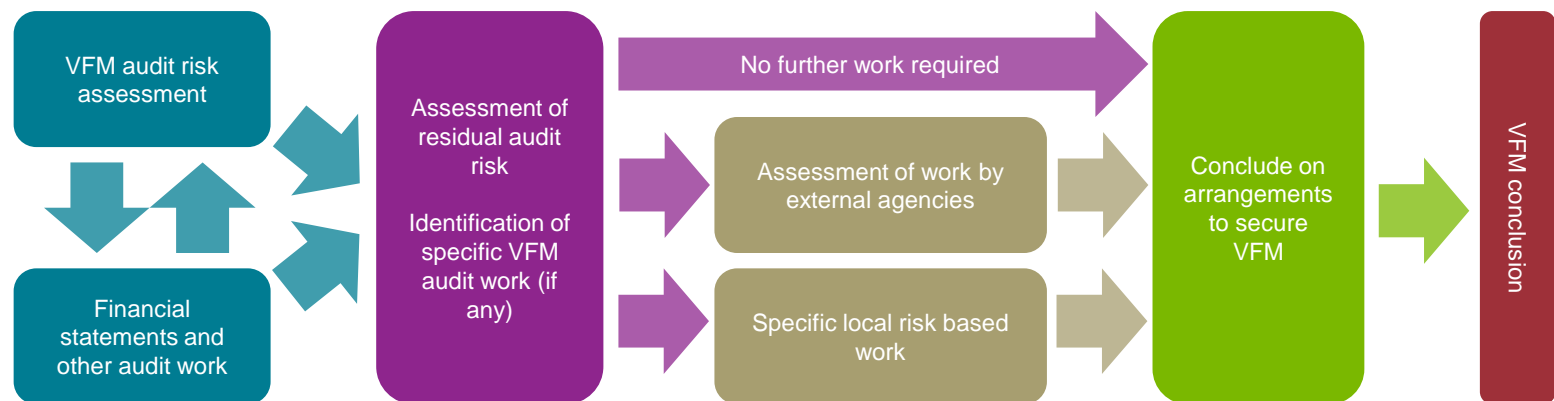
We performed a risk assessment earlier in the year and have reviewed this throughout the year.

We have not identified any significant risks to our VFM conclusion and therefore have not completed any additional work.

Conclusion

We have concluded that the Authority has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

VFM criterion	Met
Securing financial resilience	✓
Securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness	✓



Appendix 1: Key issues and recommendations

We have given each recommendation a risk rating and agreed what action management will need to take. The Authority should closely monitor progress in addressing specific risks and implementing our recommendations. We will formally follow up these recommendations next year.

Priority rating for recommendations

1 *Priority one:* issues that are fundamental and material to your system of internal control. We believe that these issues might mean that you do not meet a system objective or reduce (mitigate) a risk.

2 *Priority two:* issues that have an important effect on internal controls but do not need immediate action. You may still meet a system objective in full or in part or reduce (mitigate) a risk adequately but the weakness remains in the system.

3 *Priority three:* issues that would, if corrected, improve the internal control in general but are not vital to the overall system. These are generally issues of best practice that we feel would benefit you if you introduced them.

No.	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response / responsible officer / due date
1	3	<p>Payroll – start figure reconciliation</p> <p>Within the payroll section a reconciliation is undertaken in relation to the payroll start figure which provides assurance that payroll amendments in month are appropriate. Our testing identified that these reconciliations are not always signed as prepared and/or reviewed.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>All of the reconciliations should be signed as prepared and reviewed when completed.</p>	<p>The Payroll section have not previously been instructed to undertake such a review of the monthly reconciliation which is completed. The reconciliation was introduced many years ago and in essence, is the starting point for the officer responsible for completing the next month's payroll. It is considered that the completion of the reconciliation in itself is an additional control and the requirement for this to be independently reviewed is excessive. Resources within the HR team are limited and only one payroll technician is currently allocated to perform the monthly payroll.</p>

Appendix 2: Follow up of prior year recommendations

The Authority has implemented all of the recommendations in our ISA 260 Report 2013/14.

This appendix summarises the progress made to implement the recommendations identified in our ISA 260 Report 2013/14 and reiterates any recommendations still outstanding.

Number of recommendations that were:	
Included in original report	1
Implemented in year or superseded	1
Remain outstanding (re-iterated below)	0

No.	Risk	Recommendation	Status as at the audit date
1	2	<p>NNDR Appeals Provision</p> <p>Under the new arrangements for NNDR collection and distribution through the collection fund, the Authority has had to include a provision for appeals against NNDR valuations. The Authority has chosen to use an expert to assist them in calculating this estimate, Inform-CPI.</p> <p>Inform-CPI provided a report to the Authority which included their estimate of the appeals provision value, but this report did not set out any of the details of the assumptions or methodology that Inform-CPI had used to produce their estimate.</p> <p>The value of the provision in the collection fund is £1,118k, with the Authority's share of this in the balance sheet being £447k.</p> <p>When asked, Authority officers could not fully explain the basis for Inform-CPI's estimate.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Authority officers, and in particular the s151 Officer should understand the key assumptions behind and be able to support any estimates that are included within the financial statements.</p>	<p>The Authority utilised the information provided by Inform-CPI for monitoring purposes only in 2014/15. At the year end the provision was based on an assessment of the likely success of appeals received informed by trends and historical data.</p> <p>The Authority has experienced a significant increase in appeals during the year due to a change in guidance. Appeals of the 2010 rating list had to be submitted before 31 March 2015. Nationally most collecting authorities experienced a surge in appeals during the last quarter of the financial year.</p>

This appendix sets out the audit differences.

We are required by ISA 260 to report all uncorrected misstatements, other than those that we believe are clearly trivial, to those charged with governance (which in your case is the Audit Committee). We are also required to report all material misstatements that have been corrected but that we believe should be communicated to you to assist you in fulfilling your governance responsibilities.

Uncorrected audit differences

We are pleased to report that there are no uncorrected audit differences.

Corrected audit differences

There are no corrected audit differences to report.

A small number of amendments focused on presentational improvements have also been made to the draft financial statements. The Finance Team are committed to continuous improvement in the quality of the financial statements submitted for audit in future years.

The Code of Audit Practice requires us to exercise our professional judgement and act independently of both Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd and the Authority.

Requirements

Auditors appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd must comply with the *Code of Audit Practice* (the 'Code') which states that:

“Auditors and their staff should exercise their professional judgement and act independently of both the Commission and the audited body. Auditors, or any firm with which an auditor is associated, should not carry out work for an audited body that does not relate directly to the discharge of auditors’ functions, if it would impair the auditors’ independence or might give rise to a reasonable perception that their independence could be impaired.”

In considering issues of independence and objectivity we consider relevant professional, regulatory and legal requirements and guidance, including the provisions of the Code, the detailed provisions of the Statement of Independence included within the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd *Terms of Appointment* ('Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd Guidance') and the requirements of APB Ethical Standard 1 *Integrity, Objectivity and Independence* ('Ethical Standards').

The Code states that, in carrying out their audit of the financial statements, auditors should comply with auditing standards currently in force, and as may be amended from time to time. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd guidance requires appointed auditors to follow the provisions of ISA (UK & I) 260 *Communication of Audit Matters with Those Charged with Governance* that are applicable to the audit of listed companies. This means that the appointed auditor must disclose in writing:

- Details of all relationships between the auditor and the client, its directors and senior management and its affiliates, including all services provided by the audit firm and its network to the client, its directors and senior management and its affiliates, that the auditor considers may reasonably be thought to bear on the auditor's objectivity and independence.

- The related safeguards that are in place.
- The total amount of fees that the auditor and the auditor's network firms have charged to the client and its affiliates for the provision of services during the reporting period, analysed into appropriate categories, for example, statutory audit services, further audit services, tax advisory services and other non-audit services. For each category, the amounts of any future services which have been contracted or where a written proposal has been submitted are separately disclosed. We do this in our *Annual Audit Letter*.

Appointed auditors are also required to confirm in writing that they have complied with Ethical Standards and that, in the auditor's professional judgement, the auditor is independent and the auditor's objectivity is not compromised, or otherwise declare that the auditor has concerns that the auditor's objectivity and independence may be compromised and explaining the actions which necessarily follow from his. These matters should be discussed with the Audit Committee.

Ethical Standards require us to communicate to those charged with governance in writing at least annually all significant facts and matters, including those related to the provision of non-audit services and the safeguards put in place that, in our professional judgement, may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence and the objectivity of the Engagement Lead and the audit team.

General procedures to safeguard independence and objectivity

KPMG's reputation is built, in great part, upon the conduct of our professionals and their ability to deliver objective and independent advice and opinions. That integrity and objectivity underpins the work that KPMG performs and is important to the regulatory environments in which we operate. All partners and staff have an obligation to maintain the relevant level of required independence and to identify and evaluate circumstances and relationships that may impair that independence.

We confirm that we have complied with requirements on objectivity and independence in relation to this year's audit of the Authority's financial statements.

Acting as an auditor places specific obligations on the firm, partners and staff in order to demonstrate the firm's required independence. KPMG's policies and procedures regarding independence matters are detailed in the *Ethics and Independence Manual* ('the Manual'). The Manual sets out the overriding principles and summarises the policies and regulations which all partners and staff must adhere to in the area of professional conduct and in dealings with clients and others.

KPMG is committed to ensuring that all partners and staff are aware of these principles. To facilitate this, a hard copy of the Manual is provided to everyone annually. The Manual is divided into two parts. Part 1 sets out KPMG's ethics and independence policies which partners and staff must observe both in relation to their personal dealings and in relation to the professional services they provide. Part 2 of the Manual summarises the key risk management policies which partners and staff are required to follow when providing such services.

All partners and staff must understand the personal responsibilities they have towards complying with the policies outlined in the Manual and follow them at all times. To acknowledge understanding of and adherence to the policies set out in the Manual, all partners and staff are required to submit an annual ethics and independence confirmation. Failure to follow these policies can result in disciplinary action.

Auditor declaration

In relation to the audit of the financial statements of Wyre Borough Council for the financial year ending 31 March 2015, we confirm that there were no relationships between KPMG LLP and Wyre Borough Council, its directors and senior management and its affiliates that we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on the objectivity and independence of the audit engagement lead and audit staff. We also confirm that we have complied with Ethical Standards and the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd requirements in relation to independence and objectivity.

For 2014/15 our materiality is £1.1 million for the Authority's accounts.

We have reported all audit differences over £55k for the Authority's accounts to the Audit Committee.

Materiality

The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgment and includes consideration of three aspects: materiality by value, nature and context.

- Material errors by value are those which are simply of significant numerical size to distort the reader's perception of the financial statements. Our assessment of the threshold for this depends upon the size of key figures in the financial statements, as well as other factors such as the level of public interest in the financial statements.
- Errors which are material by nature may not be large in value, but may concern accounting disclosures of key importance and sensitivity, for example the salaries of senior staff.
- Errors that are material by context are those that would alter key figures in the financial statements from one result to another – for example, errors that change successful performance against a target to failure.

We used the same planning materiality reported in our External Audit Plan 2014/15, presented to you in March 2015.

Materiality for the Authority's accounts was set at £1.1 m which equates to around 2 percent of gross expenditure. We design our procedures to detect errors in specific accounts at a lower level of precision.

Reporting to the Audit Committee

Whilst our audit procedures are designed to identify misstatements which are material to our opinion on the financial statements as a whole, we nevertheless report to the Audit Committee/Name of the Committee any misstatements of lesser amounts to the extent that these are identified by our audit work.

Under ISA 260, we are obliged to report omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. ISA 260 defines 'clearly trivial' as matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any quantitative or qualitative criteria.

ISA 450 requires us to request that uncorrected misstatements are corrected.

In the context of the Authority, we propose that an individual difference could normally be considered to be clearly trivial if it is less than £55k for the Authority.

Where management have corrected material misstatements identified during the course of the audit, we will consider whether those corrections should be communicated to the Audit Committee to assist it in fulfilling its governance responsibilities.

Appendix 6: KPMG Audit Quality Framework

We continually focus on delivering a high quality audit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

technically enabled audit. All of our staff have a searchable data base, Accounting Research Online, that includes all published accounting standards, the KPMG Audit Manual Guidance as well as other relevant sector specific publications, such as the Audit Commission's *Code of Audit Practice*.



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

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

- A national public sector technical director who has responsibility for co-ordinating our response to emerging accounting issues, influencing accounting bodies (such as CIPFA) as well as acting as a sounding board for our auditors.

- A national technical network of public sector audit professionals is established that meets on a monthly basis and is chaired by our national technical director.

- All of our staff have a searchable data base, Accounting Research Online, that includes all published accounting standards, the KPMG Audit Manual Guidance as well as other relevant sector specific publications, such as the Audit Commission's *Code of Audit Practice*.

- A dedicated Department of Professional Practice comprised of over 100 staff that provide support to our audit teams and deliver our web-based quarterly technical training.

We continually focus on delivering a high quality audit.

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

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

Commitment to technical excellence and quality service delivery:

Our professionals bring you up- the-minute and accurate technical solutions and together with our specialists are capable of solving complex audit issues and delivering valued insights.

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

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

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

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

Our quality review results

Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd publishes information on the quality of work provided by us (and all other firms) for audits undertaken on behalf of them (<http://www.psa.co.uk/audit-quality/principal-audits/kpmg-audit-quality/>).



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