

2021 Audit Plan – Clwyd Pension Fund

Audit year: 2020-21

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Contents

2021 Audit Plan	
Summary	4
Impact of COVID-19	4
Audit of pension fund accounts	5
Fee, audit team and timetable	7

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2021 Audit Plan

Summary

- 1 This document sets out the work I plan to undertake during 2021 to discharge my statutory responsibilities as your external auditor and to fulfil my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice to examine and certify whether Clwyd Pension Fund (the Pension Fund) accounting statements are 'true and fair'.
- 2 The purpose of this plan is to set out my proposed work, when it will be undertaken, how much it will cost and who will undertake it.
- 3 There have been no limitations imposed on me in planning the scope of this audit..

Impact of COVID-19

- 4 The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a significant impact across the United Kingdom and on the work of public sector organisations. As in 2020, it is likely to significantly impact on the preparation of the 2020-21 accounts and my financial audit and performance audit work.
- 5 Recent developments in relation to a vaccine programme indicate that the Welsh Government's restrictions on movement and anticipated sickness absence levels are expected to ease through 2021. However, I recognise that there remains significant uncertainty and I understand that many local authorities may not be able to prepare accounts in line with the timetable set out in the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014. As well as the delivery of my statutory responsibilities as the Auditor General, my priority is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of Audit Wales staff, their families and those of our partners elsewhere in the public service at this incredibly challenging time.
- 6 Audit Wales staff will continue to work pragmatically to deliver the audit work set out in this plan. In response to the government advice and subsequent restrictions, we will continue to work remotely, building on the arrangements made in 2020, until such time that it is safe to resume on-site activities. I remain committed to ensuring that the work of Audit Wales staff will not impede the vital activities that public bodies need to do to respond to ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 7 Consequently, while this audit plan sets out an initial timetable for the completion of my audit work, the ongoing uncertainties around the impact of COVID-19 on the sector mean that some timings may need to be revisited. My audit team will discuss any amendments required to the proposed timetable with you as the 2021 position becomes clearer.

Audit of pension fund accounts

- 8 The audit work I undertake to fulfil my responsibilities responds to my assessment of risks. This understanding allows us to develop an audit approach which focuses on addressing specific risks whilst providing assurance for the Pension Fund accounts as a whole.
- 9 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 Pension Fund Committee prior to completion of the audit.
- 10 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.
- 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.

Financial audit risks

- 12 The following table sets out the significant risks I have identified for the audit of the Pension Fund accounts.

Exhibit 1: financial audit risks

This table summarises the key financial 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>My audit team 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; and

- evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business;

Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 national emergency continues and the pressures on staff resource and of remote working may impact on the preparation, audit and publication of accounts. There is a risk that the quality of the accounts and supporting working papers, e.g. around estimates and valuations, may be compromised leading to an increased incidence of errors. Quality monitoring arrangements may be compromised due to timing issues and/or resource availability.

We will discuss your 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.

Other areas of audit attention

Risks related to the financial statements:

- As part of its portfolio, the Pension Fund has substantial holdings in unquoted investments. They are accounted for at fair value determined by valuations provided by fund managers.
- External investment managers are appointed to manage the investment portfolio. Their own systems and records will generate account entries made to the Pension Fund account and net assets statement.
- The Pension fund has made further transfers of assets to the Welsh Pension Partnership during 2020-21.

My audit team will:

- assess whether the information provided by fund managers and their auditors support the year-end valuation.
- obtain direct confirmation from the fund managers of year-end investment balances and consider whether investment managers' internal control reports indicate specific risks to these balances.
- We will review the corresponding disinvestment to ensure the completeness of transfers. We will obtain confirmation from the auditors of WPP for the values and transactions involved.

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 not included an estimated fee in **Exhibit 2** 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; and
 - Internal Audit's planned programme of work is complete and management has responded to issues that may have affected the financial statements.

Fee

- 16 Your estimated fee for 2021 is set out in **Exhibit 2**.

Exhibit 2: audit fee

This table sets out the proposed audit fee for 2021, alongside the actual audit fee for last year.

Audit area	Proposed fee (£) ¹	Actual fee last year (£)
Audit of pension fund accounts ²	39,281	39,281

- 17 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 the relevant Pension Fund management.
- 18 Further information on my [fee scales and fee setting](#) can be found on our website.

Audit team

- 19 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 Lead	02920 320640	richard.harries@audit.wales
Michelle Phoenix	Audit Manager	02920 320660	michelle.phoenix@audit.wales
Sabel Wiliam	Audit Lead	02920 829358	sabel.wiliam@audit.wales

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

² Payable November 2020 to October 2021.

Timetable

20 The key milestones for the work set out in this plan are shown in **Exhibit 4**. As highlighted earlier, there may be a need to revise the timetable in light of developments with COVID-19.

Exhibit 4: Audit timetable

Planned output	Work undertaken	Report finalised
2021 Audit Plan	April 2021	June 2021
Audit of pension fund accounts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit of Financial Statements Report• Opinion on Financial Statements	September 2021	November 2021 November 2021
2022 Audit Plan	April 2022	June 2022

21 I can confirm that my team members are all independent of the Pension Fund and your officers. In addition, I am not aware of any potential conflicts of interest that I need to bring to your attention.



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