



2015 Audit Plan

Powys Pension Fund

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2015 Audit Plan

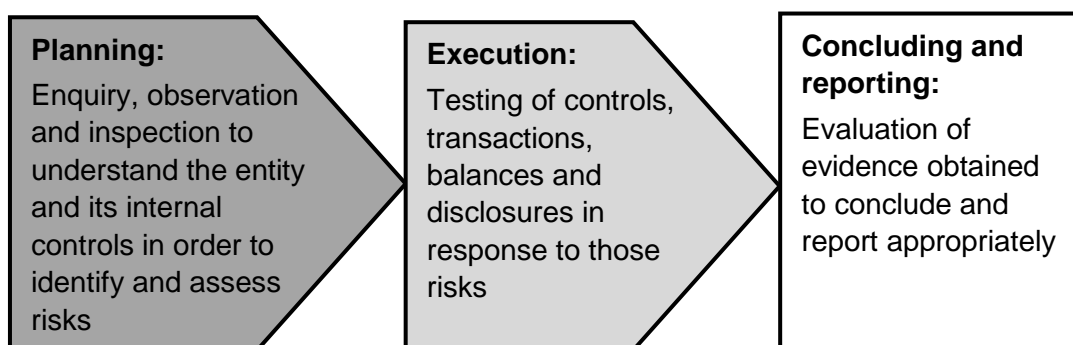
Summary

1. As your external auditor, my objective is to carry out an audit which discharges my statutory duties as Auditor General and fulfils my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice to examine and certify whether Powys Pension Fund's (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. My responsibilities, along with those of management and those charged with governance, are set out in [Appendix 1](#).

Audit of Pension Fund accounts

4. It is my responsibility to issue a report on the accounting statements which includes an opinion on their 'truth and fairness'. This provides assurance that the accounts:
 - are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error;
 - comply with statutory and other applicable requirements; and
 - comply with all relevant requirements for accounting presentation and disclosure.[Appendix 1](#) sets out my responsibilities in full.
5. 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. My audit approach consists of three phases as set out in [Exhibit 1](#).

Exhibit 1: My audit approach



6. The risks of material misstatement which I consider to be significant and which therefore require special audit consideration, are set out in **Exhibit 2** along with the work I intend to undertake to address them.

Exhibit 2: Financial audit risks

Financial audit risk	Proposed audit response
<p>Investment Managers</p> <p>The systems and records of the investment managers generate account entries made to the Pension Fund Account and Net Assets Statement.</p> <p>The investment managers provide internal controls reports on the investments held on behalf of the Pension Fund. These are independently audited and provide the Pension Fund with assurance on a wide range of controls, e.g. valuation of the investment portfolio held.</p> <p>There is a risk that the internal controls reports will not be available for assurance purposes, and/or cover all our required audit assertions.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the investment managers as a service organisation; • check that investments have been made in accordance with the Statement of Investment principles; • obtain direct confirmation from the investment managers and custodian of year-end investment balances and holdings; and • assess whether the investment manager’s internal control reports for all investment managers provide assurance over a wide range of relevant controls, including valuation of investments held.
<p>Private Equity Investments</p> <p>Year end valuations of private equity investments within the draft financial statements are based upon valuations received from investment fund managers as at 31 December as a reasonable estimate of the 31 March value.</p> <p>In addition, as there is no quoted market price, there is a greater risk for the reasonableness of valuation bases of these investments.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compare the investment valuations within the draft account to the actual valuations routinely received post production of the draft account, and where material differences in valuation arise, propose management amend the financial statements; and • seek additional assurance over the valuation basis from controls assurance reports where available.
<p>Benefits Payable</p> <p>Changes to the way in which benefits payable are calculated have arisen in 2014-15 due to a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the implementation of the new Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme, meaning that most pensions and other benefits will consist of 3 separate elements; • retirement age will now be the same as State Pension Age; and • a number of other complications which need to be accommodated, including the 50/50 option. 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirm the software updates have been correctly applied to the Altair system; • recalculate a sample of benefits payable to ensure the outputs of the system are correct; and • reconcile the information outputs of Altair to that provided to the actuary.

Financial audit risk	Proposed audit response
<p>Parameters within the Altair system require updating, hence there is a risk that calculations may be incorrect if software updates are not applied correctly.</p> <p>Benefits payable information provided to the actuary needs to be correct in order for the pension fund liability to be reasonably estimated.</p>	
<p>Transfers</p> <p>There are a small number of pending transfers into/out of the pension fund. There is a risk that these may not be correctly accounted for/disclosed within the financial statements.</p>	<p>If the transfers take place prior to the year end, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the financial statements and supporting records to ensure that transfers have been appropriately valued and disclosed.
<p>Financial Statements Production</p> <p>The timetable for producing the financial statements remains demanding, with reliance on one key member of staff.</p> <p>Management will need to ensure that appropriate arrangements for the preparation and oversight of robust financial statements, in addition to good quality working papers, are provided on the commencement of the audit, with both having been subject to appropriate senior management review.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide support and advice to the Council wherever possible without compromising our independence; • provide an audit deliverables report to assist the Council in the preparation of relevant working papers in support of the financial statements; • review closedown plans to assess that arrangements are in place to produce robust financial statements within the prescribed timetable; and • agree a timetable for the audit and certification of the financial statements.
<p>Management Override</p> <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.</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; and • evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

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7. I do not seek to obtain absolute assurance that the Pension Fund accounting statements are true and fair, 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 Audit Committee, as those charged with governance for Powys Council (the Council), as the administering authority of the Pension Fund as a whole, prior to completion of the audit. My reports will also be sent to the Pensions and Investment Committee for information.
 8. For reporting purposes, I will treat any misstatements below a 'trivial' level (the lower of five per cent of materiality or £100,000) as not requiring consideration by those charged with governance and therefore I will not report them.
 9. My fees are based on the following assumptions:
 - information provided to support the financial statements is timely, to the quality expected and has been subject to quality assurance review;
 - appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided to enable my audit team to deliver my 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.

Pension Fund annual report

10. In addition to including the pension fund accounts in their main accounting statements, administering authorities are required to publish a pension fund annual report which must include the pension fund accounts.
11. I am required to read the Pension Fund annual report and consider whether the information it contains is consistent with the audited Pension Fund accounts included in the Council's main accounting statements.
12. I also issue an audit statement confirming the consistency of the accounts included in the annual report with the audited Pension Fund accounts.

Fee, audit team and timetable

Fee

13. My proposed fee for 2015 is set out in [Exhibit 3](#).

Exhibit 3: Audit fee

Audit area	Proposed fee for 2015 (£) ¹	Actual fee for 2014 (£)
Audit of pension fund accounts	35,278	35,278

14. 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 Director of Finance.
15. Further information on my fee scales and fee setting can be found on the Wales Audit Office website at: www.wao.gov.uk/about-us/fee-scales-and-fee-setting.

Audit team

16. The main members of my team, together with their contact details, are summarised in [Exhibit 4](#).

Exhibit 4: My team

Name	Role	Contact number	E-mail address
Anthony Barrett	Engagement Lead – Financial Audit	01244 525972/ 07771 505882	anthony.barrett@wao.gov.uk
Helen Goddard	Financial Audit Manager	07813 449196	helen.goddard@wao.gov.uk
Gareth Rees	Financial Audit Team Leader	07794 002654	gareth.rees@wao.gov.uk

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

¹ The fees shown in this document are exclusive of VAT.

Timetable

18. I will provide reports, or other outputs as agreed, to the Pensions and Investment Committee and Audit Committee, covering the areas of work identified in this document. My key milestones are set out in [Exhibit 5](#).

Exhibit 5: Timetable

Planned output	Work undertaken	Report finalised
2015 Audit Plan	January - March 2015	March 2015
Financial accounts work: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit of Financial Statements Report• Opinion on Financial Statements	June – August 2015	September 2015

Appendix 1

Respective responsibilities

The Council is the administering authority of the Pension Fund. This Audit Plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of auditing standards and proper audit practices. It provides the Council with an outline of the financial audit work required for the 2014-15 Pension Fund accounts.

As amended by the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013, the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 sets out my powers and duties to undertake your financial audit. It is my responsibility to issue a certificate and report on the Pension Fund accounting statements which includes an opinion on their 'truth and fairness', providing assurance that they:

- are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error;
- comply with the statutory and other applicable requirements; and
- comply with all relevant requirements for accounting presentation and disclosure.

My audit work does not relieve management and those charged with governance of their responsibilities which include:

- the preparation of the financial statements and Annual Report in accordance with applicable accounting standards and guidance;
- the keeping of proper accounting records;
- ensuring the regularity of financial transactions; and
- securing value for money in the use of resources.

Management agrees to provide me with:

- access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- additional information that I may request from management for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to persons within the authority from whom I determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

Management will need to provide me with written representations to confirm:

- that it has fulfilled its responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements;
- that all transactions have been recorded and are reflected in the financial statements;
- the completeness of the information provided to me for the purposes of the audit; and
- to support other audit evidence relevant to the financial statements or specific assertions in the financial statements if I deem it necessary or if required by ISAs.

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