

# Merseyside Pension Fund – Annual External Audit Plan

Year ending 31 March 2021

21 May 2021



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The contents of this report relate only to the matters which have come to our attention, which we believe need to be reported to you as part of our audit planning process. It is not a comprehensive record of all the relevant matters, which may be subject to change, and in particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the Pension Fund or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

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# Key matters

## Factors

### Pension Fund developments

We have continued to hold regular meetings with the senior finance team at the Fund. During these meetings we discuss a range of key issues regarding the Fund's general developments, current and projected financial performance, developments within the LGPS Northern pooling arrangements and regulatory oversight.

At the time of producing this Plan, the Council's latest fund asset valuation shows a significant increase in the value of the net assets of the Fund. At 31 March 2020, the Fund reported net assets of £8.882bn. This valuation was lower than had previously been forecast, due to the volatility experienced in financial markets in March 2020 as a result of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since then, financial markets have recovered significantly and the Fund has seen large increases in the value of their assets. As at 31 January 2021, the Fund's assets were valued at £9.748bn. Whilst management are expecting less significant growth in quarter 4 of 2020/21, the performance of the Fund throughout the year has recovered a significant amount of the lost growth reported in the previous year end financial statements.

### Impact of Covid 19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted upon all of our lives. While there has been some relaxation of 'business as usual' arrangements, public sector bodies are still required to abide by the stewardship requirements of Managing public money and have a statutory duty to carry out their functions effectively, efficiently and economically.

The outbreak of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on public services. For Merseyside Pension Fund however the impact on the normal operations of the Fund has not been overly significant. The Fund has successfully implemented remote working arrangements and has not recorded any no significant increases in staff sickness or significant changes to governance processes. As detailed above the most significant impact of Covid-19 on the Fund has been with regards to the volatility caused to investment markets and in particular the ongoing impact of lockdowns/remote working on the valuation and rental income return from investment properties.

## Our response

- As a firm, we are absolutely committed to audit quality and financial reporting in the local government sector. Our proposed work and fee, as set further in our Audit Plan, has been agreed with the Fund's management.
- We will continue to provide you with sector updates via our Pensions Committee updates.
- We have identified an increased incentive and opportunity for organisations in the public sector to manipulate their financial statements due to increasing financial pressures. We have identified a significant risk in regards to management override of control- refer to page 5.
- The Pension Fund's valuer reported a material uncertainty in regards to the valuation of direct properties in 2019/20 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Our understanding of the latest RICs guidance and discussions with the Fund is that this uncertainty disclosure will not be repeated for 2020/21. In line with our audit approach in previous years' we have identified a significant risk in regards to the valuation of direct properties – refer to page 6.

# Introduction and headlines

## Purpose

This document provides an overview of the planned scope and timing of the statutory audit of Merseyside Pension Fund ('the Pension Fund') for those charged with governance.

## Respective responsibilities

The National Audit Office ('the NAO') has issued a document entitled Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'). This summarises where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from the audited body. Our respective responsibilities are also set out in the agreed in the Terms of Appointment and Statement of Responsibilities issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA), the body responsible for appointing us as auditor of Merseyside Pension Fund. We draw your attention to both of these documents.

## Scope of our audit

The scope of our audit is set in accordance with the Code and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK). We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on the Pension Fund's financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance (the Pensions Committee and the Audit & Risk Management Committee).

The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or TCWG of your responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the Pension Fund to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. We have considered how the Pension Fund is fulfilling these responsibilities.

Our audit approach is based on a thorough understanding of the Pension Fund's business and is risk based.

## Significant risks

Those risks requiring special audit consideration and procedures to address the likelihood of a material financial statement error have been identified as:

- Management Override of Controls
- Valuation of Directly-held Investment Property
- Valuation of Level 3 Investments

We will communicate significant findings on these areas as well as any other significant matters arising from the audit to you in our Audit Findings (ISA 260) Report.

## Materiality

We have determined planning materiality to be £87.735m (PY £88.8m) for the Pension Fund, which equates to 0.9% of your net assets as at 31 January 2021. We are obliged to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. Clearly trivial has been set at £4.386m (PY £4.4m).

## Audit logistics

Our interim visit will take place in March and April and our final visit will take place during July to September. Our key deliverables are this Audit Plan and our Audit Findings Report. Our audit approach is detailed in Appendix A.

Our fee for the audit will be £46,249 (PY: £44,356) for the Pension Fund, subject to the Pension Fund delivering a good set of financial statements and working papers.

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard (revised 2019) and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements..

# Significant risks identified

Significant risks are defined by ISAs (UK) as risks that, in the judgement of the auditor, require special audit consideration. In identifying risks, audit teams consider the nature of the risk, the potential magnitude of misstatement, and its likelihood. Significant risks are those risks that have a higher risk of material misstatement.

| Risk   | Reason for risk identification  | Key aspects of our proposed response to the risk   |
|--|---|--|
| ISA 240 Fraud in Revenue and Expenditure Recognition | <p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue.</p> <p>This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.</p> <p>We have also rebutted the presumption of fraud in expenditure recognition.</p>   | <p>Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at the Fund, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition</li> <li>• opportunities to manipulate revenue recognition are very limited</li> <li>• the culture and ethical frameworks of local authorities, including Wirral Council mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable</li> </ul> <p>Therefore we do not consider this to be a significant risk for Merseyside Pension Fund.</p>  |
| Management over-ride of controls                     | <p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities. The Fund faces external scrutiny of its spending and stewardship of funds and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance.</p> <p>We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p> | <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate the design effectiveness of management controls over journals</li> <li>• analyse the journals listing and determine the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals</li> <li>• test unusual journals recorded during the year and after the draft accounts stage for appropriateness and corroboration</li> <li>• gain an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and consider their reasonableness with regard to corroborative evidence</li> <li>• evaluate the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.</li> </ul> |

# Significant risks identified

| Risk                                | Reason for risk identification  | Key aspects of our proposed response to the risk   |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Valuation of Directly Held Property | <p>The Fund revalues its directly held property on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different from the fair value at the financial statements date. This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£472 million) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>Management have engaged the services of a valuer to estimate the current value as at 31 March 2021.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of directly held property, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>  | <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work</li> <li>• evaluate the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert</li> <li>• write out to them and discuss with the valuer the basis on which the valuation was carried out</li> <li>• challenge the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding</li> <li>• engage our own valuer to assess the instructions to the Fund's valuer, the Fund's valuation report and the assumptions that underpin the valuation</li> <li>• test, on a sample basis, revaluations made during the year to ensure they have been input correctly into the Fund's financial records</li> <li>• where available review investment manager service auditor report on design effectiveness of internal controls.</li> </ul>  |
| Valuation of Level 3 Investments    | <p>The Fund revalues its investments on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different from the fair value at the financial statements date.</p> <p>By their nature Level 3 investment valuations lack observable inputs. These valuations therefore represent a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£2,062 million) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>Under ISA 315 significant risks often relate to significant non-routine transactions and judgemental matters. Level 3 investments by their very nature require a significant degree of judgement to reach an appropriate valuation at year end.</p> <p>Management utilise the services of investment managers as valuation experts to estimate the fair value as at 31 March 2021. All of the level 3 investments held by the Fund are internally managed.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of Level 3 investments as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p> | <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate management's processes for valuing Level 3 investments</li> <li>• review the nature and basis of estimated values and consider what assurance management has over the year end valuations provided for these types of investments; to ensure that the requirements of the Code are met</li> <li>• independently request year-end confirmations from investment managers</li> <li>• for a sample of investments, test the valuation by obtaining and reviewing the audited accounts, (where available) at the latest date for individual investments and agreeing these to the fund manager reports at that date. Reconcile those values to the values at 31 March 2021 with reference to known movements in the intervening period and</li> <li>• in the absence of available audited accounts, we will evaluate the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert</li> <li>• test revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the Pension Fund's financial records</li> <li>• where available review investment manager service auditor report on design effectiveness of internal controls.</li> </ul> |



# Accounting estimates and related disclosures

The Financial Reporting Council issued an updated ISA (UK) 540 (revised): *Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures* which includes significant enhancements in respect of the audit risk assessment process for accounting estimates.

## Introduction

Under ISA (UK) 540 (Revised December 2018) auditors are required to understand and assess an entity's internal controls over accounting estimates, including:

- The nature and extent of oversight and governance over management's financial reporting process relevant to accounting estimates;
- How management identifies the need for and applies specialised skills or knowledge related to accounting estimates;
- How the entity's risk management process identifies and addresses risks relating to accounting estimates;
- The entity's information system as it relates to accounting estimates;
- The entity's control activities in relation to accounting estimates; and
- How management reviews the outcomes of previous accounting estimates.

As part of this process auditors also need to obtain an understanding of the role of those charged with governance, which is particularly important where the estimates have high estimation uncertainty, or require significant judgement.

Specifically do Pension Fund Committee members:

- Understand the characteristics of the methods and models used to make the accounting estimates and the risks related to them;
- Oversee management's process for making accounting estimates, including the use of models, and the monitoring activities undertaken by management; and
- Evaluate how management made the accounting estimates?



# Accounting estimates and related disclosures

## Additional information that will be required

To ensure our compliance with this revised auditing standard, we will be requesting further information from management and those charged with governance during our audit for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Based on our knowledge of the Pension Fund we have identified the following material accounting estimates for which this is likely to apply:

- Valuations of directly held property
- Valuation of level 2 and level 3 investments

## The Pension Fund's Information systems

In respect of the Pension Fund's information systems we are required to consider how management identifies the methods, assumptions and source data used for each material accounting estimate and the need for any changes to these. This includes how management selects, or designs, the methods, assumptions and data to be used and applies the methods used in the valuations.

When the models used include increased complexity or subjectivity, as is the case for many valuation models, auditors need to understand and assess the controls in place over the models and the data included therein. Where adequate controls are not in place we may need to report this as a significant control deficiency and this could affect the amount of detailed substantive testing required during the audit.

If management has changed the method for making an accounting estimate we will need to fully understand management's rationale for this change. Any unexpected changes are likely to raise the audit risk profile of this accounting estimate and may result in the need for additional audit procedures.

We are aware that the Pension Fund uses management experts in deriving some of its more complex estimates, e.g. asset and investment. However, it is important to note that the use of management experts does not diminish the responsibilities of management and those charged with governance to ensure that:

- All accounting estimates and related disclosures included in the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the financial reporting framework, and are materially accurate;
- There are adequate controls in place at the Pension Fund (and where applicable its service provider or management expert) over the models, assumptions and source data used in the preparation of accounting estimates.





### Estimation uncertainty

Under ISA (UK) 540 we are required to consider the following:

- How management understands the degree of estimation uncertainty related to each accounting estimate; and
- How management address this estimation uncertainty when selecting their point estimate.

For example, how management identified and considered alternative, methods, assumptions or source data that would be equally valid under the financial reporting framework, and why these alternatives were rejected in favour of the point estimate used.

The revised standard includes increased emphasis on the importance of the financial statement disclosures. Under ISA (UK) 540 (Revised December 2018), auditors are required to assess whether both the accounting estimates themselves and the related disclosures are reasonable.

Where there is a material uncertainty, that is where there is a significant risk of a material change to the estimated carrying value of an asset or liability within the next year, there needs to be additional disclosures. Note that not all material estimates will have a material uncertainty and it is also possible that an estimate that is not material could have a risk of material uncertainty.

Where there is material estimation uncertainty, we would expect the financial statement disclosures to detail:

- What the assumptions and uncertainties are;
- How sensitive the assets and liabilities are to those assumptions, and why;
- The expected resolution of the uncertainty and the range of reasonably possible outcomes for the next financial year; and
- An explanation of any changes made to past assumptions if the uncertainty is unresolved.

### Planning enquiries

As part of our planning risk assessment procedures we have issued management with a set of questions to be completed and presented to Pensions Committee for ratification. We would appreciate a prompt response to these enquires in due course.

### Further information

Further details on the requirements of ISA (UK) 540 (Revised December 2018) can be found in the auditing standard on the Financial Reporting Council's website:

[https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/0fa69c03-49ec-49ae-a8c9-cc7a2b65382a/ISA-\(UK\)-540\\_Revised-December-2018\\_final.pdf](https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/0fa69c03-49ec-49ae-a8c9-cc7a2b65382a/ISA-(UK)-540_Revised-December-2018_final.pdf)

# Other matters

## Other work

The Pension Fund is administered by Wirral Council (the 'Council'), and the Pension Fund's accounts form part of the Council's financial statements. Therefore, as well as our general responsibilities under the Code of Practice a number of other audit responsibilities also follow in respect of the Pension Fund, such as:

- We read any other information published alongside the Council's financial statements to check that it is consistent with the Pension Fund financial statements on which we give an opinion and is consistent with our knowledge of the Authority.
- We consider our other duties under legislation and the Code, as and when required, including:
  - Giving electors the opportunity to raise questions about your 2020/21 financial statements, consider and decide upon any objections received in relation to the 2020/21 financial statements;
  - Issue of a report in the public interest or written recommendations to the Fund under section 24 of the Act, copied to the Secretary of State.
  - Application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 or for a judicial review under Section 31 of the Act; or
  - Issuing an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Act.
- We carry out work to satisfy ourselves on the consistency of the pension fund financial statements included in the pension fund annual report with the audited Fund accounts.

## Other material balances and transactions

Under International Standards on Auditing, "irrespective of the assessed risks of material misstatement, the auditor shall design and perform substantive procedures for each material class of transactions, account balance and disclosure". All other material balances and transaction streams will therefore be audited. However, the procedures will not be as extensive as the procedures adopted for the risks identified in this report.

## Going concern

As auditors, we are required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding, and conclude on:

- whether a material uncertainty related to going concern exists; and
- the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements.

The Public Audit Forum has been designated by the Financial Reporting Council as a "SORP-making body" for the purposes of maintaining and updating Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (PN 10). It is intended that auditors of public sector bodies read PN 10 in conjunction with (ISAs) (UK).

PN 10 has recently been updated to take account of revisions to ISAs (UK), including ISA (UK) 570 on going concern. The revisions to PN 10 in respect of going concern are important and mark a significant departure from how this concept has been audited in the public sector in the past. In particular, PN 10 allows auditors to apply a 'continued provision of service approach' to auditing going concern, where appropriate. Applying such an approach should enable us to increase our focus on wider financial resilience and ensure that our work on going concern is proportionate for public sector bodies.

# Materiality

## The concept of materiality

Materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to the monetary misstatements but also to disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law. Misstatements, including omissions, are considered to be material if they, individually or in the aggregate, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

## Materiality for planning purposes

We have determined financial statement materiality based on a proportion of the net assets of the Pension Fund. In the prior year we used the same benchmark. Materiality at the planning stage of our audit is £87.735m (PY: £88.8m), which equates to 0.9% of your net assets as at 31 January 2021.

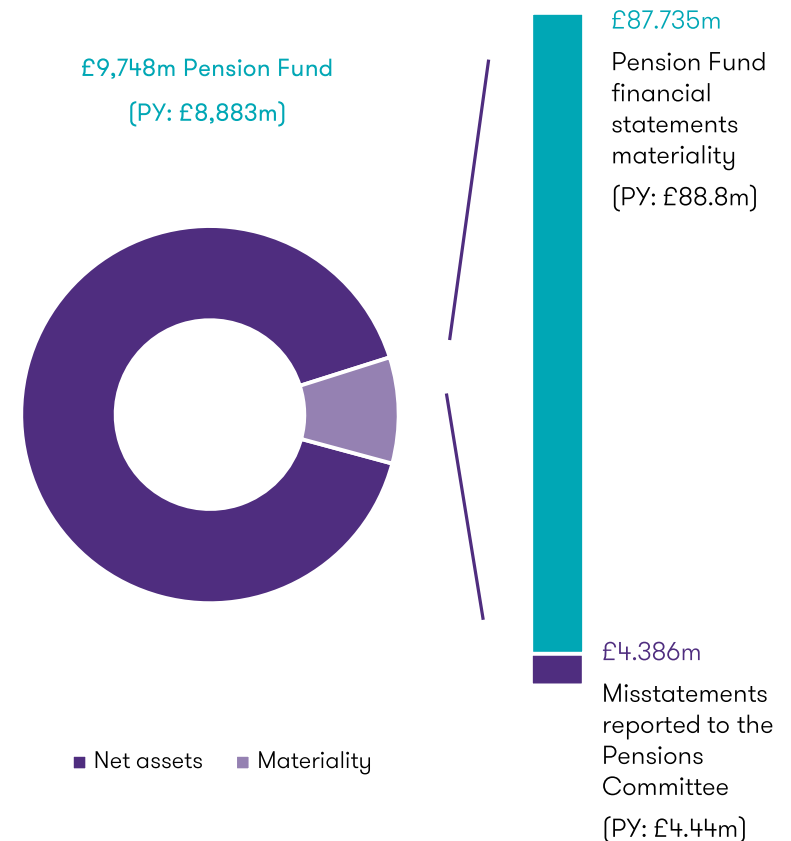
We reconsider planning materiality if, during the course of our audit engagement, we become aware of facts and circumstances that would have caused us to make a different determination of planning materiality.

## Matters we will report to the Pensions Committee

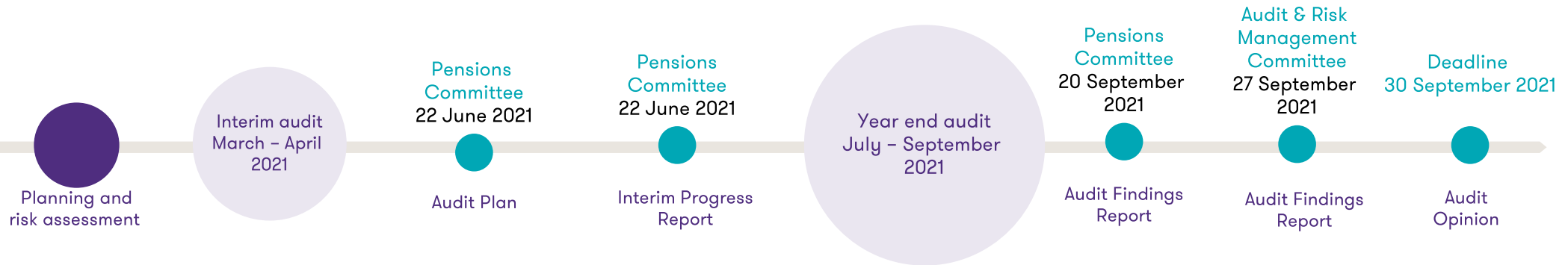
Whilst our audit procedures are designed to identify misstatements which are material to our opinion on the financial statements as a whole, we nevertheless report to the Pensions Committee any unadjusted misstatements of lesser amounts to the extent that these are identified by our audit work. Under ISA 260 (UK) 'Communication with those charged with governance', we are obliged to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. ISA 260 (UK) defines 'clearly trivial' as matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any quantitative or qualitative criteria. In the context of the Pension Fund, we propose that an individual difference could normally be considered to be clearly trivial if it is less than £4.386m (PY: £4.4m).

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

## Net assets at 31 January 2021



# Audit logistics and team



## Andrew Smith, Key Audit Partner

Andrew leads our relationship with you and takes overall responsibility for the delivery of a high quality audit, ensuring the highest professional standards are maintained and a commitment to add value to the Trust.



## Stuart Basnett, Audit Manager

Stuart plans, manages and leads the delivery of the audit, is your key point of contact for your finance team and is your first point of contact for discussing any issues.



## Chris Blakemore, Audit Incharge

Chris assists in planning, managing and delivering the audit fieldwork, ensuring that the audit is delivered effectively and efficiently. He supervises and coordinates the on-site audit team.

## Audited body responsibilities

Where audited bodies do not deliver to the timetable agreed, we need to ensure that this does not impact on audit quality or absorb a disproportionate amount of time, thereby disadvantaging other audits. Where the elapsed time to complete an audit exceeds that agreed due to a client not meeting its obligations we will not be able to maintain a team on site. Similarly, where additional resources are needed to complete the audit due to a client not meeting their obligations we are not able to guarantee the delivery of the audit to the agreed timescales. In addition, delayed audits will incur additional audit fees.

## Our requirements

To minimise the risk of a delayed audit, you need to ensure that you:

- produce draft financial statements of good quality by the agreed timetable you have agreed with us, including all notes, the Annual Report and the Annual Governance Statement
- ensure that good quality working papers are available at the start of the audit, in accordance with the working paper requirements schedule that we have shared with you
- ensure that the agreed data reports are available to us at the start of the audit and are reconciled to the values in the accounts, in order to facilitate our selection of samples for testing
- ensure that all appropriate staff are available on site throughout (or as otherwise agreed) the planned period of the audit
- respond promptly and adequately to audit queries.

# Audit fees

In 2018, PSAA awarded a contract of audit for Merseyside Pension Fund to begin with effect from 2018/19. The fee agreed in the contract was £28,399. Since that time, there have been a number of developments, particularly in relation to the revised Code and ISA's which are relevant for the 2020/21 audit.

Additionally, across all sectors and firms, the FRC has set out its expectation of improved financial reporting from organisations and the need for auditors to demonstrate increased scepticism and challenge and to undertake additional and more robust testing, as noted in the number of revised ISA's issued by the FRC that are applicable to audits of financial statements commencing on or after 15 December 2019, as detailed in Appendix 1.

As a firm, we are absolutely committed to meeting the expectations of the FRC with regard to audit quality and public sector financial reporting. We have engaged an audit expert to improve the level of assurance we require for directly –held investment property valuations, which has been included in our proposed audit fee. Our proposed work and fee for 2020/21, as set out below, is detailed overleaf and has been agreed with management.

|   | Actual Fee 2018/19 | Actual Fee 2019/20 | Proposed fee 2020/21 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Merseyside Pension Fund Audit           | £30,399            | £44,356            | £46,249              |
| IAS 19 Assurance Letters                | £8,250             | £12,250            | £12,250              |
| <b>Total audit fees (excluding VAT)</b> | <b>£38,649</b>     | <b>£56,606</b>     | <b>£58,499</b>       |

## Assumptions

In setting the above fees, we have assumed that the Pension Fund will:

- prepare a good quality set of accounts, supported by comprehensive and well presented working papers which are ready at the start of the audit
- provide appropriate analysis, support and evidence to support all critical judgements and significant judgements made during the course of preparing the financial statements
- provide early notice of proposed complex or unusual transactions which could have a material impact on the financial statements.

## Relevant professional standards

In preparing our fee estimate, we have had regard to all relevant professional standards, including paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of the FRC's [Ethical Standard \(revised 2019\)](#) which stipulate that the Engagement Lead (Key Audit Partner) must set a fee sufficient to enable the resourcing of the audit with partners and staff with appropriate time and skill to deliver an audit to the required professional and Ethical standards.

# Audit fees – detailed analysis

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Scale fee published by PSAA  | £28,399        |
| <i>Ongoing increases to scale fee first identified in 2019/20</i>        |                |
| Raising the bar/regulatory factors                                       | £2,150         |
| Enhanced audit procedures for Directly held Property and auditors expert | £5,950         |
| Enhanced audit procedures for Investments <sup>3</sup>                   | £1,750         |
| Audit fee 2019/20  | £38,249        |
| <i>New issues for 2020/21</i>  |                |
| Increased audit requirements of revised ISAs                             | £8,000         |
| <b>Total audit fees (excluding VAT)</b>                                  | <b>£46,249</b> |



# Independence and non-audit services

## Auditor independence

Ethical Standards and ISA (UK) 260 require us to give you timely disclosure of all significant facts and matters that may bear upon the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm or covered persons, relating to our independence. We encourage you to contact us to discuss these or any other independence issues with us. We will also discuss with you if we make additional significant judgements surrounding independence matters.

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention. We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard (Revised 2019) and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements. Further, we have complied with the requirements of the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 01 issued in May 2020 which sets out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Ethical Standard. For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the Council.

## Other services

The following other services provided by Grant Thornton were identified.

The amounts detailed are fees agreed to-date for audit related and non-audit services to be undertaken by Grant Thornton UK LLP in the current financial year. These services are consistent with the Pension Fund's policy on the allotment of non-audit work to your auditors.

Any changes and full details of all fees charged for audit related and non-audit related services by Grant Thornton UK LLP and by Grant Thornton International Limited network member Firms will be included in our Audit Findings report at the conclusion of the audit.








None of the services provided are subject to contingent fees.

| Service                                     | Fees £               | Threats   | Safeguards   |
|---|----------------------|---|--|
| Audit related                               |                      |   |  |
| IAS19 Assurance letters for Admitted Bodies | £12,250 (14 letters) | Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee) | The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £12,250 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £46,249 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level. |
| Non-audit related                           |                      |   |  |
| None  |                      |   |  |









# Appendix 1: Revised Auditor Standards and application guidance

## FRC revisions to Auditor Standards and associated application guidance



The following Auditing Standards and associated application guidance that were applicable to 19/20 audits, have been revised or updated by the FRC, with additional requirements for auditors for implementation in 2020/21 audits and beyond.

|  | Date of revision | Application to 2020/21 Audits   |
|--|------------------|---|
| ISQC (UK) 1 – Quality Control for Firms that Perform Audits and Reviews of Financial Statements, and other Assurance and Related Service Engagements                         | November 2019    |    |
| ISA (UK) 200 – Overall Objectives of the Independent Auditor and the Conduct of an Audit in Accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK)                         | January 2020     |    |
| ISA (UK) 220 – Quality Control for an Audit of Financial Statements  | November 2019    |    |
| ISA (UK) 230 – Audit Documentation   | January 2020     |  |
| ISA (UK) 240 – The Auditor’s Responsibilities Relating to Fraud in an Audit of Financial Statements  | January 2020     |  |
| ISA (UK) 250 Section A – Consideration of Laws and Regulations in an Audit of Financial Statements   | November 2019    |  |
| ISA (UK) 250 Section B – The Auditor’s Statutory Right and Duty to Report to Regulators of Public Interest Entities and Regulators of Other Entities in the Financial Sector | November 2019    |  |

# Appendix 1: Revised Auditor Standards and application guidance continued

|   | Date of revision | Application to 2020/21 Audits   |
|---|------------------|---|
| ISA (UK) 260 – Communication With Those Charged With Governance   | January 2020     |    |
| ISA (UK) 315 – Identifying and Assessing the Risks of Material Misstatement Through Understanding of the Entity and Its Environment | July 2020        |   |
| ISA (UK) 500 – Audit Evidence   | January 2020     |    |
| ISA (UK) 540 – Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures  | December 2018    |    |
| ISA (UK) 570 – Going Concern  | September 2019   |   |
| ISA (UK) 580 – Written Representations  | January 2020     |  |
| ISA (UK) 600 – Special considerations – Audits of Group Financial Statements (Including the Work of Component Auditors)             | November 2019    |  |
| ISA (UK) 620 – Using the Work of an Auditor’s Expert  | November 2019    |  |
| ISA (UK) 700 – Forming an Opinion and Reporting on Financial Statements   | January 2020     |  |

# Appendix 1: Revised Auditor Standards and application guidance continued

|   | <b>Date of revision</b> | <b>Application to 2020/21 Audits</b>  |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| ISA (UK) 701 – Communicating Key Audit Matters in the Independent Auditor’s Report            | January 2020            |  |
| ISA (UK) 720 – The Auditor’s Responsibilities Relating to Other Information                   | November 2019           |  |
| Practice Note 10: Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom | December 2020           |  |



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