



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru
Auditor General for Wales

2019 Audit Plan – Gwynedd Pension Fund

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

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2019 Audit Plan

Summary

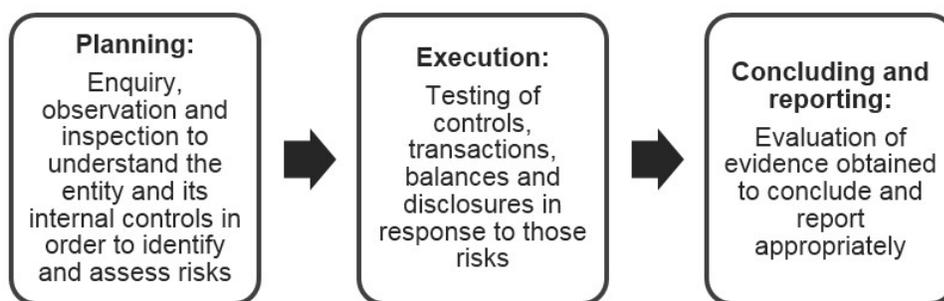
- 1 As your external auditor, my objective is to carry out an audit which discharges my statutory duties as Auditor General and fulfils my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice to examine and certify whether Gwynedd Pension Fund (the Pension Fund) accounting statements are 'true and fair'.
- 2 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.
- 4 My responsibilities, along with those of management and those charged with governance, are set out in [Appendix 1](#).

Audit of Pension Fund accounts

- 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

Alt Text: This table summarises the three phases of my financial audit approach, being planning, testing and reporting.



- 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. Also included are other key areas of audit attention my team will be focusing on.

Exhibit 2: Financial audit risks

Alt text: This table summarises financial audit risks and the corresponding audit work planned in response.

Financial audit risks	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 the design and implementation of controls operated by management over the processing of journal entries; • review accounting estimates for biases; and • evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business.
Other areas of audit attention	
<p>Completeness and accuracy of the asset transfer to Welsh Pool</p> <p>Due to the Government announcement that Local Government Pension Schemes must pool their assets together in order to reduce the cost of investing to the public purse, the Fund has agreed to become part of the Welsh Pool.</p> <p>The transfer of these assets would be an area of focus given the need to determine the completeness and accuracy of the transfer of these assets.</p>	<p>We will perform the following audit procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the design and implementation of controls operated by management to check the reconciliation of assets transferred to the new pool and the allocation of investments; • review the design and implementation of controls in place at Welsh Pool for managing investments and operating and reporting pooled fund pricing and performance; • confirm the completeness and accuracy of the values of the assets transferred by comparing the closing balances of the equity assets as per the client management breakdown and the transition report to the opening balances held at Welsh Pool;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform a review of the transition report which provides an overview of the asset transferred to Welsh Pool, in order to identify whether there are any significant issues to be noted; and • we will review the Welsh Pool internal controls report as well as the Custodian internal controls report to confirm whether there are appropriate controls in place around asset transfers.
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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 Pension Committee, Pension Board and to those charged with governance for Gwynedd Council (the Council), as the administering authority of the Pension Fund as a whole, prior to completion of the audit.
- 8 For reporting purposes, I will treat any misstatements below a trivial level (set at 5% of materiality) as not requiring consideration by those charged with governance and therefore I will not report them.

- 9 My fees and planned timescales for completion of the audit are based on the following assumptions:
- the financial statements are provided in accordance with the agreed timescales, to the quality expected and have been subject to a robust 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; and
 - 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.

Statutory audit functions

- 10 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.
- 11 Audit fees will be chargeable for work undertaken in dealing with electors' questions and objections. Because audit work will depend upon the number and nature of any questions and objections, it is not possible to estimate an audit fee for this work.
- 12 If I do receive questions or objections, I will discuss potential audit fees at the time.

Fee, audit team and timetable

Fee

- 13 Your estimated fee for 2019 is set out in Exhibit 3. This figure remains the same as the fee set out in the 2018 audit plan.

Exhibit 3: audit fee

This table sets out the proposed audit fee for 2019 alongside the actual audit fee for 2018.

	Proposed fee for 2019 (£)	Actual fee for 2018 (£)
Audit of pension fund accounts	34,200	34,200

- 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 our website.

Audit team

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

Exhibit 4: my audit team

Name	Role	Contact number	E-mail address
Andy Fern	Engagement Lead – Financial Audit	01216968981	Anfern@deloitte.co.uk
Sam Roden	Financial Audit Manager	01216955148	sroden@deloitte.co.uk
Laura Allaway	Financial Audit Team Leader	01216955536	lallaway@deloitte.co.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.

Timetable

- 18 I will provide reports, or other outputs as agreed, to the Pension Committee, Pension Board and Gwynedd Council 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
2019 Audit Plan	January – March 2019	April 2019
Financial accounts work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of Financial Statements Report • Opinion on Financial Statements 	May – June 2019	July 2019
2020 Audit Plan	January – March 2020	March 2020

Future developments to my audit work

- 19 Details of other future developments including the Wales Audit Office's Good Practice Exchange (GPX) seminars and my planned work on the readiness of the Welsh public sector for Brexit are set out in [Appendix 2](#).

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 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.

Appendix 2

Other future developments

A. Good Practice Exchange

The Wales Audit Office's GPX helps public services improve by sharing knowledge and practices that work. Events are held where knowledge can be exchanged face to face and resources shared on line. The main areas of work are regarding financial management, public-sector staff and governance. Further information, including details of forthcoming GPX events and outputs from past seminars can be found on the [GPX section of the Wales Audit Office website](#).

B. Brexit: preparations for the United Kingdom's departure from membership of the European Union

In accordance with Article 50 of the Treaty of Rome, on 29 March 2019 the United Kingdom will cease to be a member of the European Union. Negotiations are continuing, and it currently remains unclear whether agreement will be reached on a transition period to 31 December 2020, or whether a 'no deal' immediate exit will take place next March.

The Auditor General has commenced a programme of work looking at the arrangements that the devolved public sector in Wales, including all NHS bodies, is putting in place to prepare for, and respond to, Britain's exit from the European Union. This will take the form of a high-level overview to establish what is being put in place across the Welsh public sector, and what the key issues are from the perspectives of different parts of the Welsh public service.

The Auditor General intends to carry out this initial work in two tranches. In autumn 2018, he will compile a baseline summary of arrangements being put in place. This will be followed up by further audit fieldwork in spring 2019.

The aim is to produce a report in summer 2019. The report's key messages and recommendations will be framed in the context of the UK moving to a new relationship with the European Union by the end of the planned transition period.

However, if it becomes clear that the UK is likely to leave the European Union without a Withdrawal Agreement (the 'no deal' scenario), we will publish a report as early as possible in 2019, ahead of the UK leaving the European Union on 29 March.

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