

The Audit Plan for Rossendale Borough Council

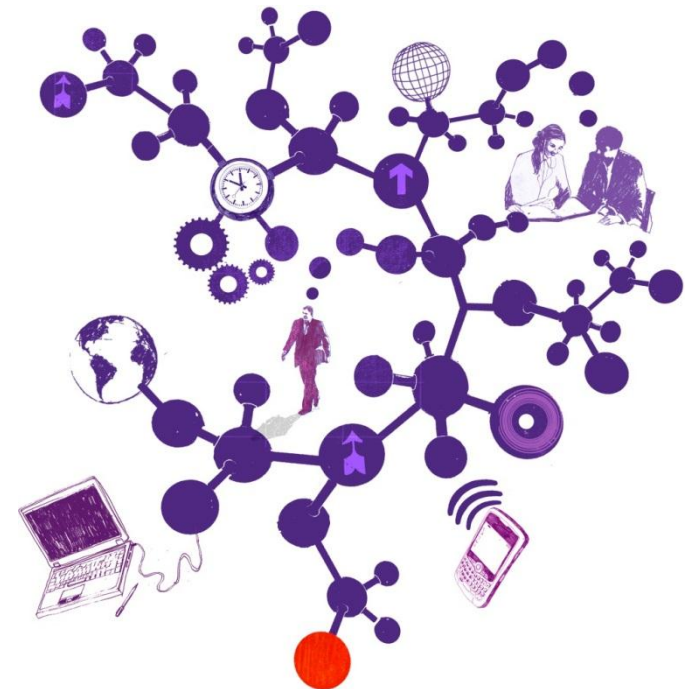
Year ended 31 March 2013

13 June 2013

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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 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 Council or any 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.

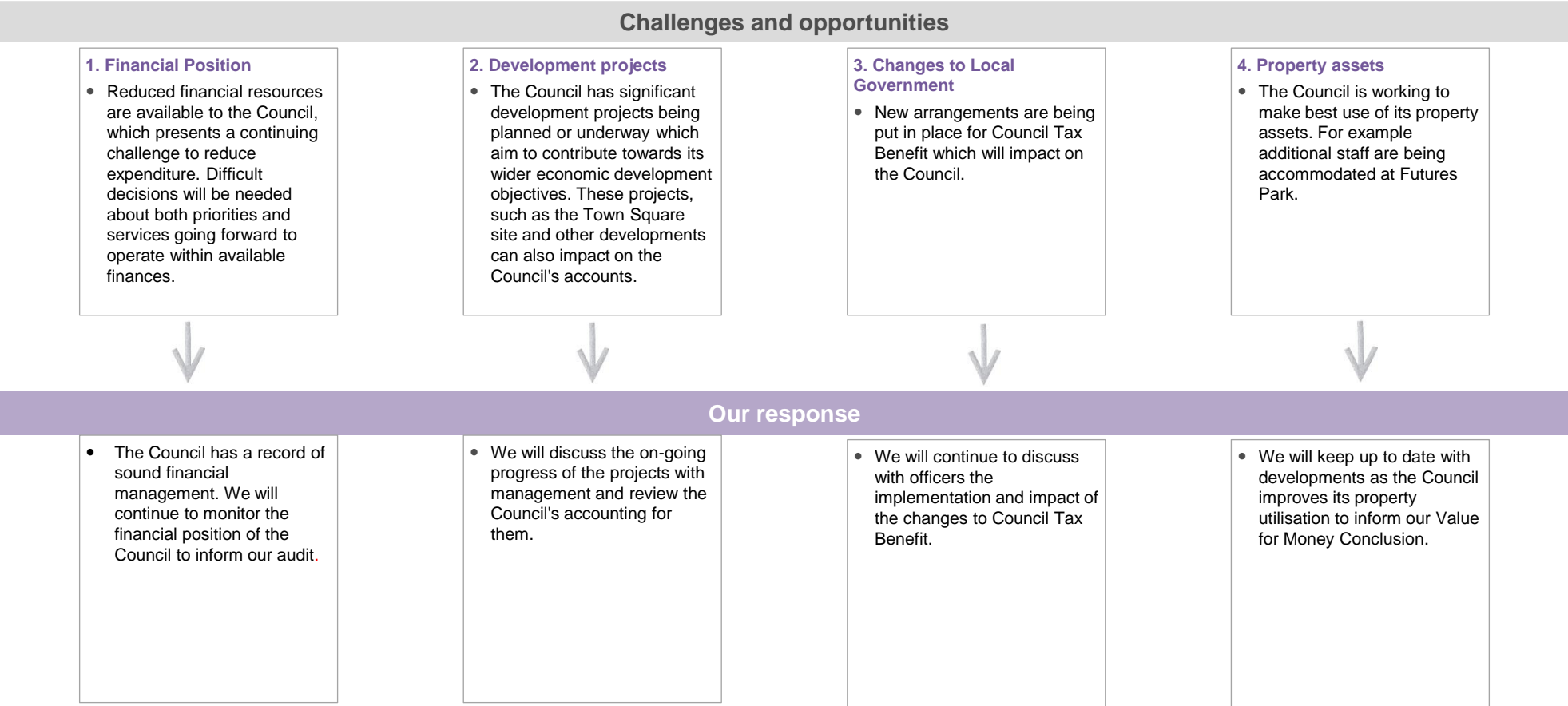
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1. Understanding your business

In planning our audit we need to understand the challenges and opportunities the Council is facing. We set out a summary of our understanding below.



2. Developments relevant to your business and the audit

In planning our audit we also consider the impact of key developments in the sector and take account of national audit requirements as set out in the Code of Audit Practice and associated guidance.

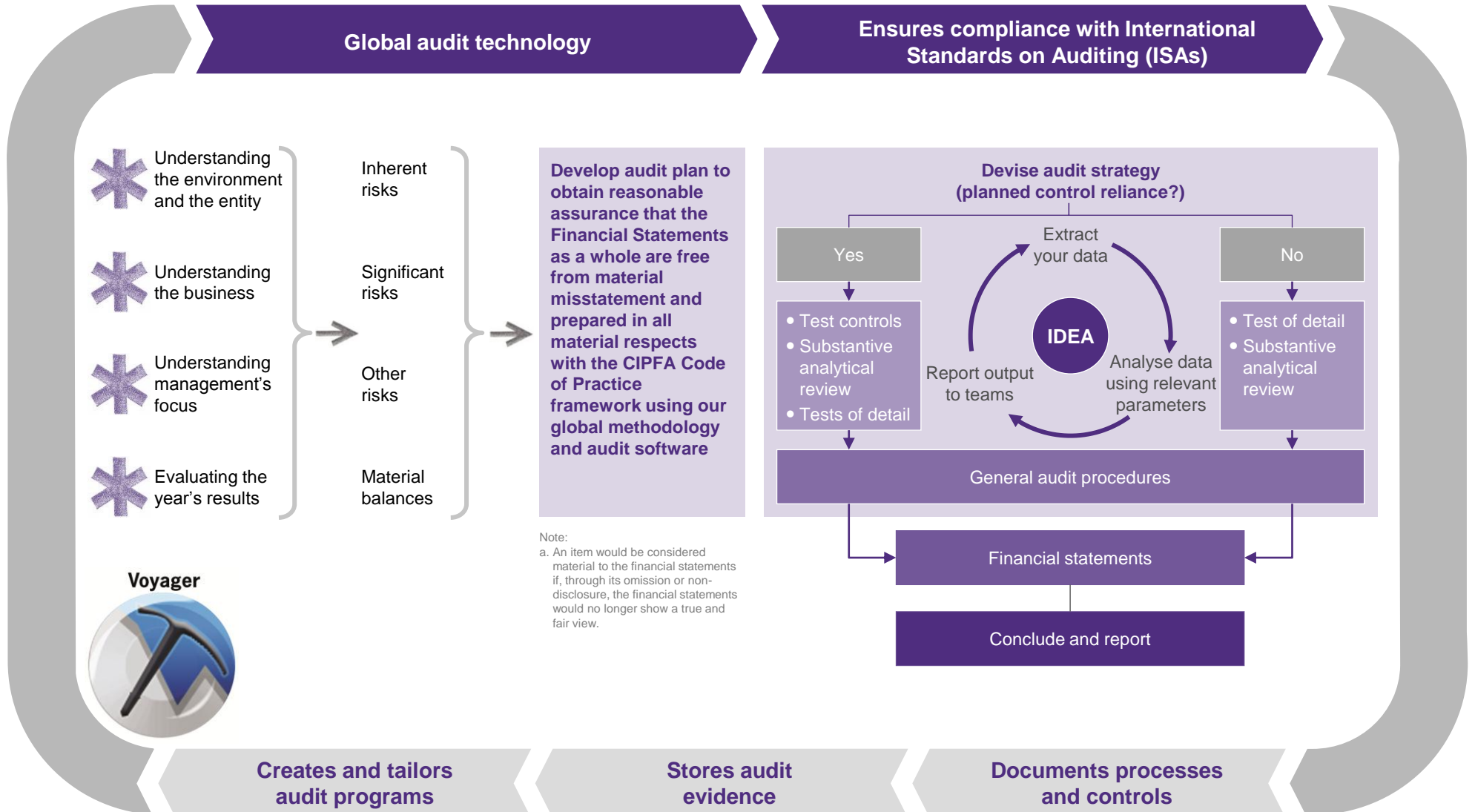
Developments and other requirements

<p>1. Financial reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the CIPFA Code of Practice • Recognition of grant conditions and income 	<p>2. Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Finance settlement 2012/13 • Welfare reform Act 2012 	<p>3. Corporate governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Governance Statement (AGS) • Explanatory foreword 	<p>4. Pensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for the impact of 2013/14 changes to the Local Government pension Scheme (LGPS) 	<p>5. Financial Pressures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing service provision with less resource • Progress against savings plans 	<p>6. Other requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is required to submit a Whole of Government accounts pack on which we provide an audit opinion • The Council completes grant claims and returns on which audit certification is required
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Our response

<p>We will ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council complies with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice through our substantive testing • grant income is recognised in line with the correct accounting standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will discuss the impact of the legislative changes with the Council through our regular meetings with senior management and those charged with governance, providing a view where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will review the arrangements the Council has in place for the production of the AGS • We will review the AGS and the explanatory foreword to consider whether they are consistent with our knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will discuss how the Council is planning to deal with the impact of the 2013/14 changes through our meetings with senior management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will review the Council's performance against the 2012/13 budget, including consideration of performance against the savings plan • We will undertake a review of Financial Resilience as part of our VFM conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will carry out work on the WGA pack in accordance with requirements • We will certify grant claims and returns in accordance with Audit Commission requirements
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3. Our audit approach



4. An audit focused on risks

We undertake a risk based audit whereby we focus audit effort on those areas where we have identified a risk of material misstatement in the accounts. The table below shows how our audit approach focuses on the risks we have identified through our planning and review of the national risks affecting the sector. Definitions of the level of risk and associated work are given below:

Significant – Significant risks are typically non-routine transactions, areas of material judgement or those areas where there is a high underlying (inherent) risk of misstatement. We will undertake an assessment of controls (if applicable) around the risks and carry out detailed substantive testing.

Other – Other risks of material misstatement are typically those transaction cycles and balances where there are high values, large numbers of transactions and risks arising from, for example, system changes and issues identified from previous years audits. We will assess controls and undertake substantive testing, the level of which will be reduced where we can rely on controls.

None – Our risk assessment has not identified a risk of misstatement. We will undertake substantive testing of material balances. Where an item in the accounts is not material we do not carry out detailed substantive testing.

Account	Material (or potentially material) balance?	Transaction Cycle	Inherent risk	Material misstatement risk?	Description of Risk	Substantive testing?
Cost of services - operating expenses	Yes	Operating expenses	Medium	Other	Operating expenses understated	✓
Cost of services – employee remuneration	Yes	Employee remuneration	Medium	Other	Remuneration expenses not correct	✓
Costs of services – Housing & council tax benefit	Yes	Welfare expenditure	Medium	Other	Welfare benefits not properly calculated.	✓
Cost of services – other revenues (fees and charges)	Yes	Other revenues	Low	None		✓
(Gains)/ Loss on disposal of non current assets	No	Property, Plant and Equipment	Low	None		×
Precepts and Levies	No	Council Tax	Low	None		×

4. An audit focused on risks (continued)

Account	Material (or potentially material) balance?	Transaction Cycle	Inherent risk	Material misstatement risk?	Description of Risk	Substantive testing?
Interest payable and similar charges	No	Borrowings	Low	None		×
Pension Interest cost	Yes	Employee remuneration	Low	None		✓
Interest and investment income	No	Investments	Low	None		×
Return on Pension assets	Yes	Employee remuneration	Low	None		✓
Impairment of investments	No	Investments	Low	None		×
Investment properties: Income expenditure, valuation, changes and gain on disposal	No	Property, Plant and Equipment	Low	None		×
Income from council tax	Yes	Council Tax	Low	None		✓
NNDR Distribution	Yes	NNDR	Low	None		✓
PFI revenue support grant and other Government grants	Yes	Grant Income	Low	None		✓
Capital grants & Contributions (including those received in advance)	Yes	Property, Plant and Equipment	Low	None		✓

4. An audit focused on risks (continued)

Account	Material (or potentially material) balance?	Transaction Cycle	Inherent risk	Material misstatement risk?	Description of Risk	Substantive testing?
(Surplus)/ Deficit on revaluation of non current assets	Yes	Property, Plant and Equipment	Low	None		✓
Actuarial (gains)/ Losses on pension fund assets & liabilities	Yes	Employee remuneration	Low	None		✓
Other comprehensive (gains)/ Losses	No	Revenue/ Operating expenses	Low	None		✗
Property, Plant & Equipment	Yes	Property, Plant and Equipment	Medium	Other	PPE activity not valid	✓
Property, Plant & Equipment	Yes	Property, Plant and Equipment	Medium	Other	Revaluation measurements not correct	✓
Heritage assets & Investment property	Yes	Property, Plant and Equipment	Low	None		✓
Intangible assets	No	Intangible assets	Low	None		✗
Investments (long & short term)	Yes	Investments	Low	None		✓
Debtors (long & short term)	Yes	Revenue	Low	None		✓
Assets held for sale	No	Property, Plant and Equipment	Low	None		✓
Inventories	No	Inventories	Low	None		✗
Cash & cash Equivalents	Yes	Bank & Cash	Low	None		✓

4. An audit focused on risks (continued)

Account	Material (or potentially material) balance?	Transaction Cycle	Inherent risk	Material misstatement risk?	Description of Risk	Substantive testing?
Borrowing (long & short term)	Yes	Debt	Low	None		✓
Creditors (long & Short term)	Yes	Operating Expenses	Medium	Other	Creditors understated or not recorded in the correct period	✓
Provisions (long & short term)	Yes	Provision	Low	None		✓
Pension liability	Yes	Employee remuneration	Low	None		✓
Reserves	Yes	Equity	Low	None		✓

5. Significant risks identified

'Significant risks often relate to significant non-routine transactions and judgmental matters. Non-routine transactions are transactions that are unusual, either due to size or nature, and that therefore occur infrequently. Judgmental matters may include the development of accounting estimates for which there is significant measurement uncertainty' (ISA 315).

In this section we outline the significant risks of material misstatement which we have identified. There are two presumed significant risks which are applicable to all audits under auditing standards (International Standards on Auditing – ISAs) which are listed below:

Significant risk	Description	Substantive audit procedures
The revenue cycle includes fraudulent transactions	Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue.	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered risks of misstatement to revenue sources • Obtained details of all journals for the first part of the year and tested all large and unusual journals year from a computer generated analysis <p>Work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of revenue recognition policies • Performance of substantive testing on material revenue and expenditure • Obtained details of all journals for the remainder of the year and test all large and unusual journals year from a computer generated analysis. • Obtain details of all journals for the year and test all large and unusual journals.
Management over-ride of controls	Under ISA 240 there is a presumption that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities.	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accounting estimates, judgments and decisions being made by management • Review of arrangements for making and recording journal entries • Obtained details of all journals for the first part of the year and tested all large and unusual journals year from a computer generated analysis. <p>Further work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accounting estimates, judgments and decisions made by management • Obtain details of all journals for the remainder of the year and test all large and unusual journals from a computer generated analysis. • Review of unusual significant transactions.

6. Other risks

The auditor should evaluate the design and determine the implementation of the entity's controls, including relevant control activities, over those risks for which, in the auditor's judgment, it is not possible or practicable to reduce the risks of material misstatement at the assertion level to an acceptably low level with audit evidence obtained only from substantive procedures (ISA 315).

Other reasonably possible risks	Description	Work completed to date	Further work planned
Operating expenses	Operating expenses understated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation and identification of the process and key controls in the operating expenses cycle Walked through sample items to confirm our understanding Testing of controls (in progress). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete testing of controls for year Review for completeness of recording of transactions Attribute tests of a sample of operating expenditure items.
Operating expenses	Creditors understated or not recorded in the correct period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation and identification of the process and key controls in the operating expenses cycle Walked through sample items to confirm our understanding. Testing of controls in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete testing of control for year Review for completeness of balances Substantive tests of year end balances, including year end adjustments.
Employee remuneration	Remuneration expenses not correct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation and identification of the process and key controls in the employee remuneration cycle Walked through sample item to confirm our understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attribute testing of a sample of employee remuneration Predictive analytic review to compare actual staff costs to our estimate.
Welfare Expenditure	Welfare benefits improperly computed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation and identification of the process and key controls in the welfare benefits cycles Walked through sample item to confirm our understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantive testing via our testing of the housing and council tax benefit claim and testing of the entries in the accounts.
Property, Plant and Equipment	Property, plant an equipment activity not valid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation and identification of the process and key controls in the property plant and equipment cycle Walked through sample item to confirm our understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantive testing of capital expenditure in the year Testing a sample of year end property plant and equipment balances.
Property, Plant and Equipment	Revaluation measurement not correct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation and identification of the process and key controls in the property plant and equipment cycle Walked through sample item to confirm our understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantive testing of capital expenditure in the year Testing a sample of year end property plant and equipment balances Review of the valuation and assumptions of the Council's expert.

7. Group audit scope and risk assessment

ISA 600 requires that as Group auditors we obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the components and the consolidation process to express an opinion on whether the group financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

Component	Significant?	Level of response required under ISA 600	Risks identified	Planned audit approach
Rossendale Transport Limited	Yes	Targeted	None	Desktop review, including review of the component's draft and final financial statements and review of the consolidation process. Correspondence and targeted enquiries as required with auditor of component at planning and final accounts audit time.

8. Results of interim audit work

Scope

As part of the interim audit work and in advance of our final accounts audit fieldwork, we have considered:

- the effectiveness of the internal audit function
- internal audit's work on the Council's key financial systems
- walkthrough testing to confirm whether controls are implemented as per our understanding in areas where we have identified a risk of material misstatement
- a review of Information Technology (IT) controls
- other planning and early audit work undertaken.

	Work performed	Conclusion/ Summary
Internal audit	We have reviewed internal audit's overall arrangements against the CIPFA Code of Practice. Where the arrangements are deemed to be adequate, we can gain assurance from the overall work undertaken by internal audit and can conclude that the service itself is contributing positively to the internal control environment and overall governance arrangements within the Council.	Overall, we have concluded that the Internal Audit service continues to provide an independent and satisfactory service to the Council. We can take assurance from their work in contributing to an effective internal control environment at the Council.
Walkthrough testing	Walkthrough tests were completed in relation to the specific accounts assertion risks which we consider to present a risk of material misstatement to the financial statements.	No significant issues were noted and in-year internal controls were observed to have been implemented in accordance with our documented understanding.

8. Results of interim audit work (continued)

	Work performed	Conclusion/ Summary
Review of information technology (IT) controls	Our information systems specialist is to perform a high level review of the general IT control environment, as part of the overall review of the internal controls system. The work is scheduled for May 2013	This work was undertaken in May 2013. We will adjust our audit plan if necessary based on the results of this work. We are not aware of matters that impact on the plan at present. Should we become aware of any, we will report these to those charged with governance.
Journal entry controls	<p>We have reviewed the Council's journal entry policies and procedures as part of determining our journal entry testing strategy and have not identified any material weaknesses which are likely to adversely impact on the Council's control environment or financial statements.</p> <p>To date we have undertaken detailed testing on journal transactions recorded for the first nine months of the financial year, by extracting significant and unusual entries for further review. No issues have been identified that need to be reported.</p>	<p>No significant issues identified.</p> <p>We will complete our detailed testing on journal transactions recorded in the main accounting system throughout the year using computer assisted audit techniques (CAATs)</p>
Minutes review	We have reviewed the minutes for the Council, Cabinet and Audit and Accounts Committee meetings and relevant papers throughout the year to identify potential audit risks.	The minutes and papers have not identified any additional risks above those reported in this audit plan.
Planning analytic review	We have reviewed the reported financial results for the Council for the first nine months of the year to ensure that income and expenditure were in line with the Council's budget expectations. This preliminary planning analytic review found income and expenditure to be in line with expectations. Any differences were fully identified and explained in the monitoring reports.	This preliminary planning analytic review found income and expenditure to be in line with expectations. We will update our review for the annual outturn.

9. Value for Money

Introduction

The Code of Audit Practice requires us to issue a conclusion on whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the Value for Money (VfM) conclusion.

2012/13 VfM conclusion

Our Value for Money conclusion will be based on two reporting criteria specified by the Audit Commission.

We will tailor our VfM work to ensure that as well as addressing high risk areas it is, wherever possible, focused on the Council's priority areas and can be used as a source of assurance for members. Where we plan to undertake specific reviews to support our VfM conclusion, we will issue a Terms of Reference for each review outlining the scope, methodology and timing of the review. These will be agreed in advance and presented to the Audit and Accounts Committee.

The results of all our local VfM audit work and key messages will be reported in our Audit Findings report and in the Annual Audit Letter. We will agree any additional reporting to the Council on a review-by-review basis.

Code criteria

The Council has proper arrangements in place for:

- securing financial resilience
- challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

We will consider whether the Council is prioritising its resources with tighter budget

Work to be undertaken

Risk-based work focusing on arrangements relating to financial governance, strategic financial planning and financial control and securing value for money. Specifically we will:

- undertake a risk assessment based on the specified criteria and areas identified within the Audit Commission guidance
- update our understanding using existing available information, a review of key documents and our cumulative knowledge
- hold discussions with key officers and request further information as required
- engage with those charged with governance during the year
- assess the budget outturn for 2012/13 and the monitoring of this during the year
- consider the Council's medium term financial planning arrangements in the context of resource prioritisation and financial resilience
- produce a financial resilience report.

10. Logistics and our team



Date	Activity
January 2013	Planning meeting
January-February 2013	Interim site work
June 2013	The audit plan presented to Audit Committee
June 2013	Year end fieldwork commences
July 2013	Audit findings clearance meeting
August 2013	Group accounts
September 2013	Audit Committee meeting to report our findings
September 2013	Sign financial statements and VfM conclusion
October 2013	Issue Annual Audit Letter

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11. Fees and independence

Fees

	£
Council audit	60,161
Grant certification	13,150
Total	73,311

Fees for other services

Service	Fees £
None	Nil

Our fee assumptions include:

- Our fees are exclusive of VAT
- Supporting schedules to all figures in the accounts are supplied by the agreed dates and in accordance with the agreed upon information request list
- The scope of the audit, and the Council and its activities have not changed significantly
- The Council will make available management and accounting staff to help us locate information and to provide explanations

Independence and ethics

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 Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards and therefore we confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

Full details of all fees charged for audit and non-audit services will be included in our Audit Findings report at the conclusion of the audit.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirement of the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards.

12. Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance

International Standards on Auditing (ISA) 260, as well as other ISAs, prescribe matters which we are required to communicate with those charged with governance, and which we set out in the table opposite.

This document, The Audit Plan, outlines our audit strategy and plan to deliver the audit, while The Audit Findings will be issued prior to approval of the financial statements and will present key issues and other matters arising from the audit, together with an explanation as to how these have been resolved.

We will communicate any adverse or unexpected findings affecting the audit on a timely basis, either informally or via a report to the Council.

Respective responsibilities

This plan has been prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission (www.audit-commission.gov.uk).

We have been appointed as the Council's independent external auditors by the Audit Commission, the body responsible for appointing external auditors to local public bodies in England. As external auditors, we have a broad remit covering finance and governance matters.

Our annual work programme is set in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code') issued by the Audit Commission and includes nationally prescribed and locally determined work. Our work considers the Council's key risks when reaching our conclusions under the Code.

It is the responsibility of the Council 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 Council is fulfilling these responsibilities.

	Audit plan	Audit findings
Our communication plan		
Respective responsibilities of auditor and management/those charged with governance	✓	
Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit. Form, timing and expected general content of communications	✓	
Views about the qualitative aspects of the entity's accounting and financial reporting practices, significant matters and issue arising during the audit and written representations that have been sought		✓
Confirmation of independence and objectivity	✓	✓
A statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, relationships and other matters which might be thought to bear on independence.	✓	✓
Details of non-audit work performed by Grant Thornton UK LLP and network firms, together with fees charged.		
Details of safeguards applied to threats to independence		
Material weaknesses in internal control identified during the audit		✓
Identification or suspicion of fraud involving management and/or others which results in material misstatement of the financial statements		✓
Non compliance with laws and regulations		✓
Expected modifications to the auditor's report, or emphasis of matter		✓
Uncorrected misstatements		✓
Significant matters arising in connection with related parties		✓
Significant matters in relation to going concern		✓



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