



The Audit Plan for Cannock Chase District Council

Year ended 31 March 2017

March 2017

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Cannock Chase District Council
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March 2017

Dear Members of the Audit and Governance Committee

Audit Plan for Cannock Chase District Council for the year ending 31 March 2017

This Audit Plan sets out for the benefit of those charged with governance (in the case of Cannock Chase District Council, the Audit and Governance Committee), an overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK & Ireland) 260. This document is to help you understand the consequences of our work, discuss issues of risk and the concept of materiality with us, and identify any areas where you may request us to undertake additional procedures. It also helps us gain a better understanding of the Council and your environment. The contents of the Plan have been discussed with management.

We are required to perform our audit in line with Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and in accordance with the Code of Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General in April 2015. Our responsibilities under the Code are to:

- give an opinion on the Council's financial statements,
- satisfy ourselves the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

As auditors we are responsible for performing the audit, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland), which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements which give a true and fair view.

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. In particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the Council or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit. 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.

We look forward to working with you during the course of the audit.

Yours sincerely

Richard Percival

Engagement Lead

Chartered Accountants

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Understanding your business and key developments

Developments

The Autumn Statement

The Chancellor detailed plans in the Autumn Statement to increase funding for Housing and Infrastructure, and further extend devolved powers to Local Authorities.

CCDC are non-constituent members of the West Midlands Combined Authority and during the year have received £8million worth of investment from the WMCBA Collective Investment Fund.

Future funding arrangements

Local government continues to face enormous challenges. The Council had reflected the changes arising from the December 2015 New Homes Bonus consultation in its provisional budget. The 2017/18 settlement in addition to the 2015 proposals further increased the Deadweight Parameter impacting again on the Grant received by the authority. Further changes to Deadweight baselines are possible in the future.

The Council have rejected a Multi Year Settlement as it still seeks transitional funding following the closure of Rugeley Power Station. The Council continues to lobby Central Government however the outcome is not expected to be favourable.

Key challenges

Financial challenges

The Council is facing some significant financial challenges over the short to medium term and these have been addressed as part of the implementation of the Financial Recovery Plan (FRP) – February 2016.

It was identified in the September 2016 iteration of the Plan that the Council faced minimum saving requirements ranging from £1.3m to £2.4m, dependent on the timing of Mill Green. At month 9 the Council is forecasting an underspend for the year of £662k.

The FRP sought to address the ongoing shortfall of £1.6m, assuming the opening of Mill Green in 2019.

Although a balanced budget has been set for future years, this forecast assumes the use of working balances to address shortfalls of £508k and £571k in 2017/18 and 2018/19 respectively.

A shortfall of £181k exists in 2019/20 and although sufficient working balances exist to address this, the financial plan identifies further saving initiatives that will be developed in the next financial year.

Reduction in business rates

Rugeley Power Station is currently being decommissioned after the earlier than expected closure in June 2016. This has reduced annual business rate income by approximately £1 million for the Council. This significant reduction in business rates income is included in the Council's future forecasts and financial plans. The Mill Green Designer Outlet Village Development is expected to open in 2018/19 and will go some way to alleviating the pressures from this significant reduction in income.

Financial reporting changes

CIPFA Code of Practice 2016/17 (the Code)

Changes to the Code in 2016/17 reflect aims of the 'Telling the Story' project, to streamline the financial statements to be more in line with internal organisational reporting and improve accessibility to the reader of the financial statements.

The changes affect the presentation of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Movement in Reserves Statements, segmental reporting disclosures and a new Expenditure and Funding Analysis note has been introduced. The Code also requires these amendments to be reflected in the 2015/16 comparatives by way of a prior period adjustment.

Earlier closedown

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require councils to bring forward the approval and audit of financial statements to 31 July by the 2017/2018 financial year.

Estimation

As the earlier closedown of the accounts over the next two years is managed the preparation of the financial statements may in future include a greater reliance on estimation.

Our response

- We aim to complete all our substantive audit work of your financial statements by 31st July 2017.
- As part of our opinion on your financial statements, we will consider whether your financial statements accurately reflect the financial reporting changes in the 2016/17 Code.
- We will review the Council's progress in managing its responsibilities for public health and how it is working with partners, as part of our work in reaching our VFM conclusion.
- We will keep you informed of changes to the financial reporting requirements for 2016/17 through on-going discussions and invitations to our technical update workshops.

Materiality

In performing our audit, we apply the concept of materiality, following the requirements of International Standard on Auditing (UK & Ireland) (ISA) 320: Materiality in planning and performing an audit. The concept of 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. An item does not necessarily have to be large to be considered to have a material effect on the financial statements. An item may be considered to be material by nature, for example, when greater precision is required (e.g. senior manager salaries and allowances).

We determine planning materiality (materiality for the financial statements as a whole determined at the planning stage of the audit) in order to estimate the tolerable level of misstatement in the financial statements, assist in establishing the scope of our audit engagement and audit tests, calculate sample sizes and assist in evaluating the effect of known and likely misstatements in the financial statements.

We have determined planning materiality based upon professional judgement in the context of our knowledge of the Council. In line with previous years, we have calculated financial statements materiality based on a proportion of the gross revenue expenditure of the Council. For purposes of planning the audit we have determined overall materiality to be £1,291k (being 1.8% of gross revenue expenditure). In the previous year, we determined materiality to be £1,359k (being 2% of gross revenue expenditure). Due to the declining financial position of the Council and the potential for increased public scrutiny, we have deemed it appropriate to reduce our materiality threshold this year. Our assessment of materiality is kept under review throughout the audit process and we will advise you if we revise this during the audit.

Under ISA 450, auditors also set an amount below which misstatements would be clearly trivial and would not need to be accumulated or reported to those charged with governance because we would not expect that the accumulation of such amounts would have a material effect on the financial statements. "Trivial" matters are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any criteria of size, nature or circumstances. We have defined the amount below which misstatements would be clearly trivial to be £64,550.

ISA 320 also requires auditors to determine separate, lower, materiality levels where there are 'particular classes of transactions, account balances or disclosures for which misstatements of lesser amounts than materiality for the financial statements as a whole could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users'. We have identified the following items where separate materiality levels are appropriate:

Balance/transaction/disclosure	Explanation	Materiality level
Senior officers remuneration	Due to public interest in these disclosures and the statutory requirement for them to be made.	£20,000
Related party transactions	Due to public interest in these disclosures and the statutory requirement for them to be made.	£20,000 (Individual mis-statements will be assessed individually, with due regard given to the nature of the error and its potential impact on the materiality of the other party).

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; Judgments about materiality are made in light of surrounding circumstances, and are affected by the size or nature of a misstatement, or a combination of both; and Judgments about matters that are material to users of the financial statements are based on a consideration of the common financial information needs of users as a group. The possible effect of misstatements on specific individual users, whose needs may vary widely, is not considered. (ISA (UK and Ireland) 320)

Significant risks identified

An audit is focused on risks. Significant risks are defined by ISAs (UK and Ireland) as risks that, in the judgment 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.

Significant risk	Description	Audit procedures
The revenue cycle includes fraudulent transactions	<p>Under ISA (UK and Ireland) 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue streams 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>Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at Cannock Chase District Council, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition; • Opportunities to manipulate revenue recognition are very limited; • The culture and ethical frameworks of local authorities, including Cannock Chase District Council, mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable. <p>Therefore do not consider this to be a significant risk for Cannock Chase District Council.</p>
Management over-ride of controls	<p>Under ISA (UK and Ireland) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities.</p>	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the control environment for preparation and authorisation of journal entries. <p>Work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accounting estimates, judgments and decisions made by management. • Review of journal entry process and selection of unusual journal entries for testing back to supporting documentation. • Review of unusual significant transactions.
Going Concern - Disclosures	<p>You are facing significant financial challenges and have forecast a significant deficit position for 2016/17. This raises doubts over the completeness and adequacy of the going concern disclosures in the accounts, particularly in relation to material uncertainty.</p>	<p>Work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of management's assessment of going concern assumptions and supporting information, e.g. 2016/17 and 2017/18 budgets and cash flow forecasts and associated sensitivity analysis. • Review of completeness and accuracy of disclosures on material uncertainties in the financial statements.

"Significant risks often relate to significant non-routine transactions and judgmental matters. Non-routine transactions are transactions that are unusual, due to either 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 (UK and Ireland) 315) . In making the review of unusual significant transactions "the auditor shall treat identified significant related party transactions outside the entity's normal course of business as giving rise to significant risks." (ISA (UK and Ireland) 550)

Significant risks identified (continued)

Significant risk	Description	Audit procedures
<p>Valuation of pension fund net liability</p>	<p>The Council's pension fund asset and liability as reflected in its balance sheet represent a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p>	<p>Work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will identify the controls put in place by management to ensure that the pension fund liability is not materially misstated. We will also assess whether these controls were implemented as expected and whether they are sufficient to mitigate the risk of material misstatement. • We will review the competence, expertise and objectivity of the actuary who carries out your pension fund valuation. We will gain an understanding of the basis on which the valuation is carried out. • We will undertake procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made. • We will review the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in notes to the financial statements with the actuarial report from your actuary.
<p>Changes to the presentation of local authority financial statements</p>	<p>CIPFA has been working on the 'Telling the Story' project, for which the aim was to streamline the financial statements and improve accessibility to the user and this has resulted in changes to the 2016/17 Code of Practice.</p> <p>The changes affect the presentation of income and expenditure in the financial statements and associated disclosure notes. A prior period adjustment (PPA) to restate the 2015/16 comparative figures is also required.</p>	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have documented and evaluated the process for the recording the required financial reporting changes to the 2016/17 financial statements. • We have reviewed the re-classification of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) comparatives to ensure that they are in line with the Authority's internal reporting structure. • We have reviewed the appropriateness of the revised grouping of entries within the Movement In Reserves Statement (MIRS). <p>Work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will test the classification of income and expenditure for 2016/17 recorded within the Cost of Services section of the CIES. • We will test the completeness of income and expenditure by reviewing the reconciliation of the CIES to the general ledger. • We will test the classification of income and expenditure reported within the new Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) note to the financial statements. • We will review the new segmental reporting disclosures within the 2016/17 financial statements to ensure compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice.

Other risks identified

Reasonably possible risks (RPRs) are, in the auditor's judgment, other risk areas which the auditor has identified as an area where the likelihood of material misstatement cannot be reduced to remote, without the need for gaining an understanding of the associated control environment, along with the performance of an appropriate level of substantive work. The risk of misstatement for an RPR or other risk is lower than that for a significant risk, and they are not considered to be areas that are highly judgmental, or unusual in relation to the day to day activities of the business.

Reasonably possible risks	Description of risk	Audit procedures
<p>Operating expenses</p>	<p>Creditors understated or not recorded in the correct period (Operating expenses understated)</p>	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have completed our documentation of the system and performed a walkthrough of the identified controls. Our work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach <p>Results of interim testing to date are summarised on Page 15</p> <p>Work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing of payments made after the year end to ensure that liabilities have been recorded in the correct period. We will hold discussions with appropriate personnel to obtain a detailed understanding of the accruals process.
<p>Employee remuneration</p>	<p>Employee remuneration accruals understated (Remuneration expenses not correct)</p>	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have completed our documentation of the system and performed a walkthrough of the identified controls. Our work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach. We have completed substantive payroll testing (specifically Payslip and HR related transactions) up to Month 10. We have completed a payroll trend analysis of the total payroll costs and deductions up to Month 10. <p>Results of interim testing to date are summarised on Page 15</p> <p>Further work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a reconciliation from the payroll ledger to the general ledger. Complete the payroll trend analysis for the final 2 months of the year. Complete the substantive payroll testing for the final 2 months of the year. Undertake further work in regards to payroll related notes, agreeing figures back to source documentation.

"In respect of some risks, the auditor may judge that it is not possible or practicable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence only from substantive procedures. Such risks may relate to the inaccurate or incomplete recording of routine and significant classes of transactions or account balances, the characteristics of which often permit highly automated processing with little or no manual intervention. In such cases, the entity's controls over such risks are relevant to the audit and the auditor shall obtain an understanding of them." (ISA (UK and Ireland) 315)

Other risks identified (continued)

Reasonably possible risks	Description of risk	Audit procedures
<p>Property, Plant and Equipment</p>	<p>Revaluation measurements are not correct.</p>	<p>Work completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have completed our documentation of the system and performed a walkthrough of the identified controls. Our work has not identified any weaknesses which may impact on our audit approach. <p>Results of interim testing to date are summarised on Page 15</p> <p>Further work planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will substantively test assets revalued during the financial period. • Undertake testing to ensure that the fair value of property, plant and equipment (which was not revalued during the period) is not materially different to the value held in the financial statements. • We will review the policy used to value HRA stock to ensure it is in line with 'the Code'.

Other risks identified (continued)

Going concern

As auditors, we are required to “obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence about the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern assumption in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and to conclude whether there is a material uncertainty about the entity's ability to continue as a going concern” (ISA (UK and Ireland) 570). We will review the management's assessment of the going concern assumption and the disclosures in the financial statements.

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 the previous sections but will include:

- Intangible assets
- Assets held for sale
- Cash and cash equivalents
- Trade and other receivables
- Borrowings and other liabilities (long and short term)
- Provisions
- Useable and unusable reserves
- Movement in Reserves Statement and associated notes
- Statement of cash flows and associated notes
- Financing and investment income and expenditure
- Taxation and non-specific grants
- New note disclosures
- Officers' remuneration note
- Leases note
- Related party transactions note
- Capital expenditure and capital financing note
- Financial instruments note
- Housing Revenue Account and associated notes
- Collection Fund and associated notes

Value for Money

Background

The Code requires us to consider 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.

The National Audit Office (NAO) issued its guidance for auditors on value for money work for 2016/17 in November 2016. The guidance states that for local government bodies, auditors are required to give a conclusion on whether the Council has proper arrangements in place.

The guidance identifies one single criterion for auditors to evaluate:

In all significant respects, the audited body takes properly informed decisions and deploys resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

This is supported by three sub-criteria as set out opposite:

Sub-criteria	Detail
Informed decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting in the public interest, through demonstrating and applying the principles and values of sound governance Understanding and using appropriate cost and performance information (including, where relevant, information from regulatory/monitoring bodies) to support informed decision making and performance management Reliable and timely financial reporting that supports the delivery of strategic priorities Managing risks effectively and maintaining a sound system of internal control
Sustainable resource deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning finances effectively to support the sustainable delivery of strategic priorities and maintain statutory functions Managing and utilising assets effectively to support the delivery of strategic priorities Planning, organising and developing the workforce effectively to deliver strategic priorities.
Working with partners and other third parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with third parties effectively to deliver strategic priorities Commissioning services effectively to support the delivery of strategic priorities Procuring supplies and services effectively to support the delivery of strategic priorities.

Value for Money (continued)

Risk assessment

We have carried out an initial risk assessment based on the NAO's auditor's guidance note (AGN03). In our initial risk assessment, we considered:

- our cumulative knowledge of the Council, including work performed in previous years in respect of the VfM conclusion and the opinion on the financial statements.
- the findings of other inspectorates and review agencies.
- any illustrative significant risks identified and communicated by the NAO in its Supporting Information.
- any other evidence which we consider necessary to conclude on your arrangements.

We have identified significant risks which we are required to communicate to you. These are set out overleaf.

Reporting

The results of our VfM audit work and the key messages arising will be reported in our Audit Findings Report and in the Annual Audit Letter.

We will include our conclusion in our auditor's report on your financial statements.

Value for money (continued)

We set out below the significant risks we have identified as a result of our initial risk assessment and the work we propose to address these risks.

Significant risk	Link to sub-criteria	Work proposed to address
<p>Financial sustainability</p> <p>The Council is facing some significant financial challenges over the short to medium term and a great deal of uncertainty exists in relation to future income and funding streams. As such the Council instigated a Finance Recovery Plan (FRP) which was approved by Cabinet on 22 September 2016.</p> <p>Cabinet approved the FRP but noted the great deal of uncertainty that existed in relation to the actual level of saving requirement with the Council facing an ongoing minimum saving requirement ranging from £1.3 million rising to £2.4 million if the Mill Green Designer Outlet Village does not progress. The approved FRP is based upon delivering a minimum of £1.6 million of savings with effect from 1 April, 2019.</p> <p>At month 9, the Council is forecasting an underspend for the 2016/17 year of £662k. Council approved its Medium term Budget in February 2017 and although a balanced budget has been set for the period to 2019/20, this forecast assumes the use of working balances of £508k and £571k in 2017/18 and 2018/19 respectively.</p>	<p>This links to the Council's arrangements for sustainable resource deployment, to ensure that finances are planned effectively to support the sustainable delivery of strategic priorities to maintain statutory functions.</p> <p>In addition this also links to the arrangements that are in place to make informed decisions, ensuring as an organisation they are acting in the public interest.</p>	<p>We will review the Council's arrangements in place for identifying, agreeing and monitoring its financial recovery plan and savings plans, as well as the way in which key findings are communicated to the Governing Body and the Audit and Governance Committee.</p> <p>We will review the Council's medium term financial plan and consider whether the assumptions embedded within the plan are reasonable and achievable.</p> <p>We will also assess the Council's arrangements for making informed decisions by reviewing the governance arrangements that are currently in place.</p>

Other audit responsibilities

In addition to our responsibilities under the Code of Practice in relation to your financial statements and arrangements for economy, efficiency and effectiveness we have a number of other audit responsibilities, as follows:

- We will undertake work to satisfy ourselves that the disclosures made in your Annual Governance Statement are in line with CIPFA/SOLACE guidance and consistent with our knowledge of the Council.
- We will read your Narrative Statement and check that it is consistent with the financial statements on which we give an opinion and that the disclosures included in it are in line with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice.
- We will carry out work on your consolidation schedules for the Whole of Government Accounts process in accordance with NAO instructions to auditors.
- We consider our other duties under the Act and the Code, as and when required, including:
 - We will give electors the opportunity to raise questions about your financial statements and consider and decide upon any objections received in relation to the financial statements;
 - issue of a report in the public interest; and
 - making a written recommendation to the Council, copied to the Secretary of State
- We certify completion of our audit.

Results of interim audit work

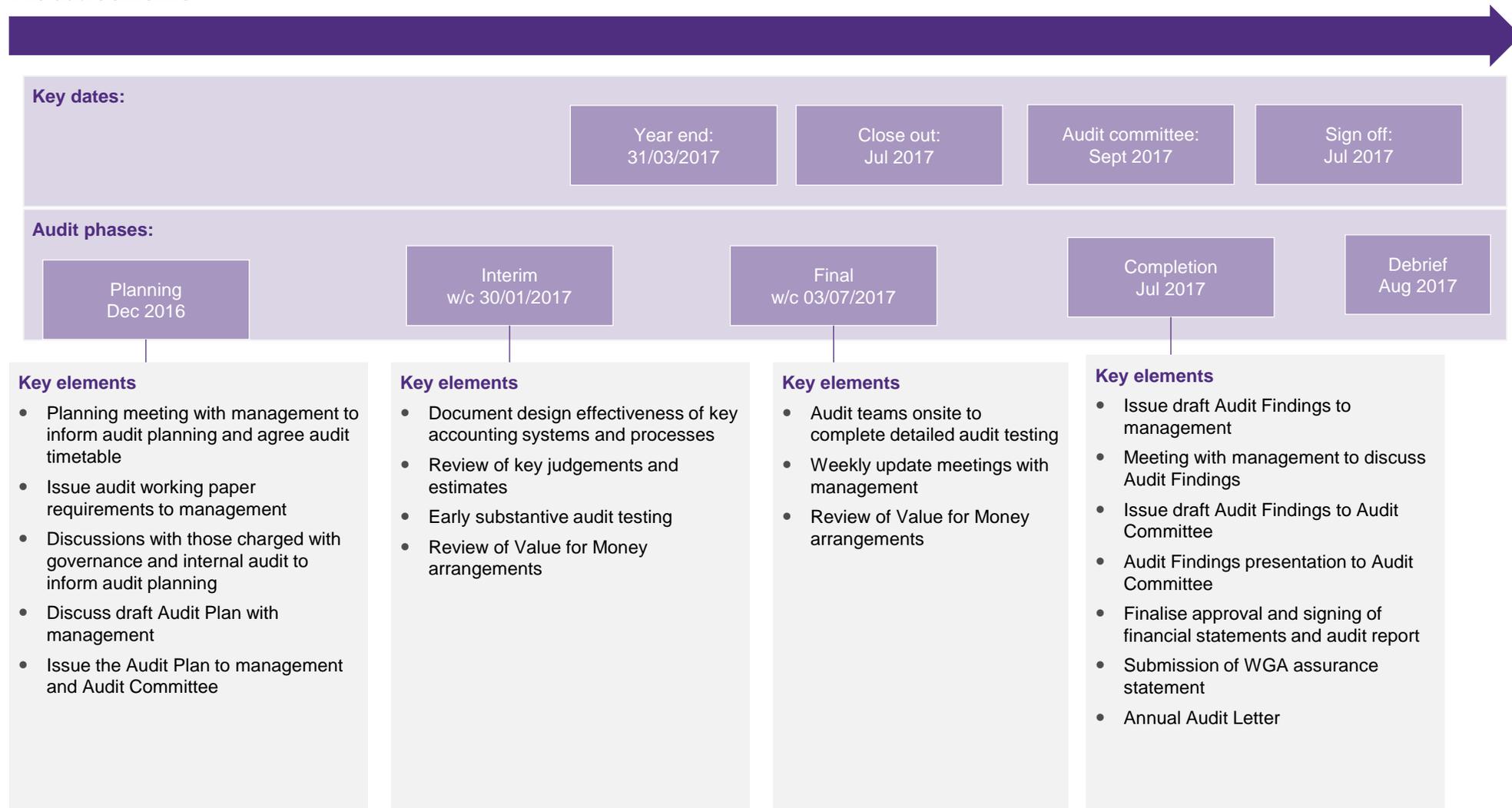
	Work performed	Conclusion
Walkthrough testing	We have completed walkthrough tests of the Council's controls operating in areas where we consider that there is a risk of material misstatement to the financial statements. (Operating Expenditure, Property, Plant and Equipment and Employee Remuneration)	In 2016/17 we have identified one control weakness with regards to the lack of authorisation of bank reconciliations. It has been established that these reconciliations have been completed within a timely manner and by an appropriately experienced individual, however, these have not been signed and authorised by a more senior member of the finance team. Our work to date has not identified any further weaknesses in relation which impact on our audit approach.
Journal entry controls	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.	Our work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach.
Shared service arrangements	We reviewed the internal audit reports on the controls operating at the Council's shared service providers.	Our work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach.
Early testing of risk cycles	We have undertaken early substantive testing in the following areas:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 months worth of income (fees and charges) - 10 months worth of payroll testing - 10 months worth of expenditure testing 	Finance is a shared service function between Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council. We have identified an error in our interim work which, due to its nature, may impact both Local Authorities. A £564k Business Levy payment has been made by CCDC to Staffordshire County Council. This payment was due to be paid by Stafford Borough Council. This has been paid by the wrong authority, therefore overstating Cannock's expenditure and understating Stafford's expenditure. We will undertake further work to understand the extent of this type of error and provide an update in our final report. Other work performed in relation to payroll and income testing has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach.

Results of interim audit work (continued)

	Work performed	Conclusion
Entity level controls	<p>We have obtained an understanding of the overall control environment relevant to the preparation of the financial statements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and enforcement of integrity and ethical values • Commitment to competence • Participation by those charged with governance • Management's philosophy and operating style • Organisational structure • Assignment of authority and responsibility • Human resource policies and practices 	<p>Our work has identified no material weaknesses which are likely to adversely impact on the Council's financial statements</p>
Internal audit	<p>We have completed a high level review of internal audit's overall arrangements. Our work has not identified any issues which we wish to bring to your attention.</p> <p>We have also reviewed internal audit's work on the Council's key financial systems to date. We have not identified any significant weaknesses impacting on our responsibilities.</p>	<p>We have concluded that the internal audit service provides an independent and satisfactory service to the Council and that internal audit work contributes to an effective internal control environment.</p> <p>Our review of internal audit work has not identified any weaknesses which impact on our audit approach.</p>

The audit cycle

The audit timeline



Audit Fees

Fees

	£
Council audit	52,109
Grant Certification (Housing Benefit Subsidy – indicative fee)	7,740
Total audit fees (excluding VAT)	59,849

Our fee assumptions include:

- 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
- The accounts presented for audit are materially accurate, supporting working papers and evidence agree to the accounts, and all audit queries are resolved promptly.

Grant certification

- Our fees for grant certification cover only housing benefit subsidy certification, which falls under the remit of Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited
- Fees in respect of other grant work, such as reasonable assurance reports, are shown under 'Fees for other services'.

Fees for other services

Fees for other services detailed on the following page, reflect those agreed at the time of issuing our Audit Plan. Any changes will be reported in our Audit Findings Report and Annual Audit Letter.

What is included within our fees

- A reliable and risk-focused audit appropriate for your business
- Feed back on your systems and processes, and identifying potential risks, opportunities and savings
- Invitations to events hosted by Grant Thornton in your sector, as well as the wider finance community
- Regular sector updates
- Constructive feedback on your people, your processes and your business plan
- Ad-hoc telephone calls and queries
- Technical briefings and updates
- Internal benchmarking of key controls including IT systems
- Regular contact to discuss strategy and other important areas
- A review of accounting policies for appropriateness and consistency
- Annual technical updates for members of your finance team
- Regular Audit Committee Progress Reports

Independence and non-audit services

Ethical Standards and ISA (UK and Ireland) 260 require us to give you timely disclosure of matters relating to our independence

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 we confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

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

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to Client Name. The following audit related and non-audit services were identified for the Council for 2016/17:

Fees for other services

Service	Fees £
Audit certification – Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts (indicative fee)	2,500

The amounts detailed are fees agreed to-date for audit related and non-audit services (to be) undertaken by Grant Thornton UK LLP (and Grant Thornton International Limited network member Firms) in the current financial year. Full details of all fees charged for audit and non-audit 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.

The above services are consistent with the Council's policy on the allotment of non-audit work to your auditors.

Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance

International Standard on Auditing (UK and Ireland) (ISA) 260, as well as other ISAs (UK and Ireland) 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

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit in accordance with ISAs (UK and Ireland), which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance.

This plan has been prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (<http://www.psa.co.uk/appointing-auditors/terms-of-appointment/>)

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 at the time of our appointment. 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 NAO and includes nationally prescribed and locally determined work (<https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/about-code/>).

The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities.

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.

Our communication plan	Audit Plan	Audit Findings
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 issues 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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