



Audit Completion Report

North West Leicestershire District Council

Year ending 31 March 2019

CONTENTS

1. Executive summary
2. Significant findings
3. Internal control recommendations
4. Summary of misstatements
5. Value for Money conclusion

Appendix A – Draft management representation letter

Appendix B – Draft auditor’s report

Appendix C – Independence

Our reports are prepared in the context of the ‘Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies’ and the ‘Appointing Person Terms of Appointment’ issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited.

Reports and letters prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to the Council are prepared for the sole use of the Council and we take no responsibility to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party.

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Audit and Governance Committee Members
North West Leicestershire District Council
Council Offices
Whitwick Road
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 3FJ

16 July 2019

Dear Members

Audit Completion Report – Year ended 31 March 2019

We are pleased to present our Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2019. The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit conclusions.

The scope of our work, including identified significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement, was outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum which we presented on 29 March 2019. We have reviewed our Audit Strategy Memorandum and concluded that the original significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement remain appropriate.

We would like to express our thanks for the assistance of your team during our audit.

If you would like to discuss any matters in more detail then please do not hesitate to contact me on 0787 597 4291.

Yours faithfully

Mark Surridge
Mazars LLP

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VAT number: 839 8356 73

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of this report and principal conclusions

The Audit Completion Report sets out the findings from our audit of North West Leicestershire District Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2019, and forms the basis for discussion at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 24 July 2019.

The detailed scope of our work as your appointed auditor for 2018/19 is set out in the National Audit Office's (NAO) Code of Audit Practice. Our responsibilities and powers are derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and, as outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, our audit has been conducted in accordance with International Standards of Auditing (UK) and means we focus on audit risks that we have assessed as resulting in a higher risk of material misstatement.

Sections 2 and 5 of this report outline the detailed findings from our work on the financial statements and our conclusion on the Council's arrangements to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Section 2 also includes our conclusions on the audit risks and areas of management judgement in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, which include:

Significant Audit Risks:

- Management override of controls
- Valuation of property, plant and equipment (PPE) and investment properties (IP)
- Valuation of net defined benefit liability

Key Judgement Areas:

- Prior year audit adjustments and Fixed Assed Register opening balances
- Provision for business rate appeals against the rating list
- Minimum revenue provision (MRP)

Status of our audit work

This first year audit carried out by Mazars has been challenging, given the tight timescale for us to complete the work and for management to respond to our audit queries, including the additional complications arising from a prior period adjustment and the late notification of a national issue regarding potentially material adjustments to pension valuations, as described in Section 2. We have, though, substantially completed our work on the financial statements and Value for Money conclusion for the year ended 31 March 2019. At the time of preparing this report the matters outstanding, which we will continue to work on up to the date of the Committee's meeting, include:

- Finalising our work in testing the significant risk areas identified in our relating to the PPE and IP valuations, including clearing our queries with the Council's valuer and other officers
- Finalising our work in relation to the significant risk areas relating to the net Pensions liability, including receiving assurances requested from the Leicestershire PF auditor, reviewing the latest IAS19 valuation report and the disclosures in the final set of the financial statements and reviewing and acting on the latest PwC report (for NAO) on the Actuaries' work
- Receiving the remaining 3rd party verifications for the Council's bank accounts, investments and loans, and completing our testing of the Cash and Cash equivalents and Borrowing balances
- Checking the amendments to the draft financial statements proposed by management to correct matters identified during the audit.
- Clearing any remaining quality control points and completing the remaining audit closure steps.

We will update the Audit and Governance Committee at its 24 July 2019 meeting on these and any other matters arising from the audit.

Our audit approach

We provided details of our intended audit approach in our Audit Strategy Memorandum presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in March 2019. We have not made any changes to our audit approach since we presented our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

Materiality

We set materiality at the planning stage of the audit at £1,195k using a benchmark of 2% of the Council's 2017/18 Gross Operating Expenditure. Our final assessment of materiality, based on the final financial statements and qualitative factors, was at to leave materiality at the same value. We set our trivial threshold (the level under which individual errors are not communicated to the Audit and Governance Committee), at the planning stage of the audit at £36k (3% of materiality), and again our final assessment has been to keep this threshold at the same value.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key findings of our work

As we outline below, our work is substantially complete. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the outstanding work, at the time of issuing this report we have the following conclusions:

Opinion on the financial statements

We anticipate issuing, subject to completing the remaining audit procedures, an unqualified opinion, without modification, on the amended financial statements. Our proposed audit opinion is included in the draft auditor's report in Appendix B.

Value for Money conclusion

We anticipate concluding that the Council had proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Our draft auditor's report, including proposed conclusion, is provided in Appendix B.

Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

We anticipate completing our work on your WGA submission, in line with the group instructions issued by the NAO, by the deadline of 13 September 2019. We anticipate reporting that the WGA submission is consistent with the audited financial statements

Wider powers

The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and to consider any objection made to the accounts. We have received no such objections or questions from local electors.

Misstatements and internal control recommendations

At Section 3 we have confirmed that, based on the audit work completed to date, there are no identified significant control deficiencies we are required to report to the Audit and Governance Committee..

At Section 4 we have summarised the audit misstatements identified from the audit work to date that we are required to report to the Audit and Governance Committee.

2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Set out below are the significant findings from our audit that include:

- our audit conclusions regarding significant risks and key areas of management judgement outlined in the Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- our comments in respect of the accounting policies and disclosures that you have adopted in the financial statements. On page 9 we have concluded that the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework and provide commentary on any significant accounting policy changes that have been made during the year; and
- any significant difficulties we experienced during the audit.

Significant risks and key areas of management judgement

As part of our planning procedures we considered the risks of material misstatement in the Council's financial statements that required special audit consideration and reported these to you in our Audit Strategy Memorandum. Our risk assessment is a continuous process and we regularly consider whether new significant risks have arisen and how we intend to respond to these risks. No new risks have been identified since we issued our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

Significant risk

Management
override of controls

Management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur there is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud on all audits.

How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk by:

- Documenting our understanding of the processes and controls in place to mitigate the risks identified, and walk through those processes and controls to confirm our understanding;
- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other material adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements;
- Evaluating the business rationale for any significant transactions outside the course of the business;
- Understanding the oversight given by those charged with governance of management process over fraud;
- Making enquiries of management and Internal Audit regarding actual or any suspicions of fraud;
- Considering whether the Council's accounting policies are consistent with industry standards;

Clarification from the Audit Strategy Memorandum

In our Audit Strategy Memorandum we also said we would:

- Review the calculation of management's material accruals, estimates and provisions for evidence of management bias;
- Sample test accruals and provisions based on established testing thresholds; and
- Review material aspects of capital expenditure on property plant and equipment to ensure it meets the relevant accounting requirements to be capitalised.

This work has been performed, with no issues arising. However, we wish to clarify that this testing was not to address this Significant Risk, they formed part of our standard audit procedures.

Audit conclusion

Our audit procedures have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements, or other matters that we wish to bring to Members' attention in relation to management override of controls.

2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

Significant risk

Valuation of property, plant and equipment, investment properties and assets held for sale

Description of the risk

The Council's accounts contain material balances and disclosures relating to its holding of property, plant and equipment, investment properties and assets held for sale, with the majority of land and building assets required to be carried at valuation. Due to high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with those held at valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.

Relevant account balances

Where relevant, Cost of Services (Expenditure) for any impairment charges

Those items of Property, Plant and Equipment held at valuation being Council Dwellings, Other Land and Buildings and Surplus Assets as described in Note 9.

Investment Properties

How we addressed this risk

There has been no change in our planned audit strategy. We do however, wish to clarify our approach, which results in minor changes of how the tests performed are described versus our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

We addressed this risk through performing the following audit work:

- Reconciling valuations from the valuer's report had been recorded in the Fixed Asset Register
- Testing a sample of assets valued during the year to valuation reports
- Where material, testing the basis for impairment of assets, the value and correct accounting treatment
- Critically assessing the Council's valuer's scope of work and methodology used
- Considering the impact of any assets not valued during the year

In our Audit Strategy Memorandum we also said we would test a sample of capital expenditure in 2018/19 where material to confirm that the additions are appropriately valued in the financial statements. This work has been performed, with no issues arising. However, we wish to clarify that this testing was not to address this Significant Risk, it formed part of our standard audit procedures.

Audit conclusion

Our work to date has not identified any material errors in the financial statements.

Our work, however, is ongoing and we will provide an update to the Audit and Governance Committee on the day of the meeting.

2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

Significant risk

Valuation of net defined pension liability

Description of the risk

The Council's accounts contain material liabilities relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Council uses an actuary to provide an annual valuation of these liabilities in line with the requirements of IAS 19 Employee Benefits. Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with this valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.

Relevant account balances

Net defined pension liability

How we addressed this risk

There has been no change in our planned audit strategy. We do however, wish to clarify our approach, which results in minor changes of how the tests performed are described versus our Audit Strategy Memorandum. We addressed this risk through performing the following audit work:

- Reviewing the appropriateness of the Pension Asset and Liability valuation methodologies applied by the Pension Fund Actuary, and the key assumptions included within the valuation. This included comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information provided by PWC, the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office; and
- Agreeing the data in the IAS 19 valuation report provided by the Fund Actuary for accounting purposes to the pension accounting entries and disclosures in the Council's financial statements.

In addition, we

- Critically assessed the competency, objectivity and independence of the Leicestershire Pension Fund's Actuary, Hymans Robertson;
- Liaised with the auditors of the Pension Fund to gain assurance that the controls in place at the Pension Fund are operating effectively. This included the processes and controls in place to ensure data provided to the Actuary by the Pension Fund for the purposes of the IAS 19 valuation is complete and accurate;
- Performed a walkthrough of payroll transactions at the Council to understand how pension contributions which are deducted and paid to the Pension Fund by the Council (note, our Audit Strategy Memorandum implied we would perform detailed tests, which was an incorrect transposition from our Audit file);

Audit conclusion

The procedures we have undertaken to date have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements, or other matters that we wish to bring to Members' attention. Our audit work is however in progress and we will update the Audit and Governance Committee on any significant matters which affect our audit conclusion.

All local authorities have been affected by an accounting issue that impacts the value of pension liabilities. Two on-going legal cases (Guaranteed Minimum Pensions and McCloud/Sergeant) have created uncertainty over whether pension liabilities are fairly stated. The Council's actuary (via the Pension Fund) did not make an allowance in its actuarial valuation for either of these cases and early guidance given to councils was that the impact would not be material. The Council, as with nearly all local authorities in England, prepared the financial statements on this basis. In our view, these cases give rise to at least a constructive obligation, which is required to be recognised under IAS 19. As a result the Council obtained a revised valuation from the Pension Fund via its actuarial expert incorporating these two issues.

The updated IAS19 valuation report received 5 July 2019, to take into account the implications of the GMP and McCloud judgments and changes to the Pension Fund's asset values at 31 March 2019, included material differences to the original report used to prepare the draft financial statements. Management is to amend the draft financial statements for these differences. We have summarised the amendments at page 11.

2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

Other Risk Area	Description of the risk
Prior year audit adjustments and Fixed Asset Register (FAR) opening balances	<p>The Council maintained a local spreadsheet based FAR for HRA properties during 2017/18 and deferred its move to a new on-line platform to allow it to process the prior year audit adjustments identified during KPMG's 2017/18 audit. The Council plans to migrate the current FAR data to the new platform during 2018/19 and it is the new system which will form the basis of the current year's FAR and accounting entries for the financial statements. It is important that the data is migrated completely.</p> <hr/> <p>How we addressed the risk</p> <p>In the event the Council did not migrate to the new platform in the year. As part of its preparations it identified there were historical misstatements in its FAR. Some of these misstatements were material and the Council has restated its opening balances to show the correct brought forward amounts. The prior period adjustment is disclosed at Note 40 to the draft financial statements.</p> <p>To ensure we have sufficient assurance over the opening balances we reviewed the restatement and carried out testing on the supporting working papers to confirm that the accounting adjustments had been correctly put through.</p> <hr/> <p>Audit conclusion</p> <p>We did not identify any material errors in the adjusted brought forward balances.</p> <hr/>

2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

Key area of management judgment

Provision for business rate appeals against the rating list

Description of the judgment

The issue of a new rating list and a change in the appeals process has created delays in appeals being notified to the Council. Consequently management need to make an assumption over the likely level of appeals that will be successful based on their rating knowledge.

How we addressed this management judgement

We addressed this judgment through by:

- Reviewing the basis of the Council's calculation of its provision by recalculating the provision, evaluating the key assumptions of the provision, vouching movements in the provision and confirming completeness of entries;
- Assessing whether the provision has been calculated and recorded in accordance with the Council's accounting policy; and
- Assessing whether the amount provided at the period end is appropriate, taking into account the Council's anticipated actual liability.

Audit conclusion

Our audit procedures relating to the Council's provision for business rate appeals have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements, or other matters that we wish to bring to members' attention.

Key area of management judgment

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Description of the judgment

Local authorities are normally required each year to set aside some of their revenues as provision for debt in respect of capital expenditure financed by borrowing or long term credit arrangements, by reference to the prior year's closing Capital Financing Requirement. The amount to be set aside each year is not prescribed although an overarching principle of prudence is expected to be adopted. This is supported by statutory guidance as to how this could be achieved and the Council is required to have regard to this in setting its MRP policy. Management judgement is therefore exercised in determining the level of its prudent provision.

How we addressed this management judgement

We addressed this judgment through performing the following audit work:

- Reviewing the Council's MRP policy to ensure that it has been developed with regard to the statutory guidance;
- Assessing whether the provision has been calculated and recorded in accordance with the Council's policy;
- Assessing whether the amount provided for the period is appropriate, taking into account the Council's Capital Financing Requirement; and
- Confirming that any charge has been accounted for in accordance with the Code.

Audit conclusion

Our audit procedures have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements in relation to the Council's MRP

2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

Opening balances

We have performed relevant audit procedures on the Council's opening balances, which included an examination of the Prior Period Adjustment. We have no observations or matters to report relating to the opening financial position as at 1 April 2018.

Qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Council's accounting policies and disclosures and concluded they comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (the Code), appropriately tailored to the Council's circumstances.

Draft accounts were received from the Council in advance of the 31 May 2019 deadline and were complete. We also received the requested working papers ahead of our audit visit and officers have responded to audit queries and requests for additional information as the audit has progressed.

Significant difficulties during the audit

During the course of the audit we did not encounter any significant difficulties and we have had the full co-operation of management and staff. We will meet with officers ahead of the 2019/20 audit to provide feedback on the detailed working papers and any improvement opportunities for other areas related to the accounts production and audit processes.

There were two matters which have required us to carry out additional audit work this year. We have referred at page 8 to the work required to examine the prior period adjustment audit. Officers' work to process the adjustments was not completed until May 2019 and we were unable to carry out our planned review ahead of the main audit visit. This work need to instead be carried out alongside the other audit work planned for the main on-site visit.

The second challenging aspect of the audit related to the actuarial valuation of the Pension Liability that, as explained on page 7, impacted all local authorities and participants in a local government pension scheme. The Council prepared the draft financial statements based on guidance that had been issued at the time, however our view was that the actuarial valuations should have taken into account both the McCloud and GMP judgements. We raised our concerns at an early stage, however this is a complex area, required third party input, and within compressed reporting deadlines meant that the work performed presented some challenges for all parties.

We will discuss with management the impact of these and any other matters arising on the audit fee for the year and update the Audit and Governance Committee if a fee variation application to Public Sector Audit Appointments is required.

Wider responsibilities

Our powers and responsibilities under the 2014 Act are broad and include the ability to:

- issue a report in the public interest;
- make statutory recommendations that must be considered and responded to publicly;
- apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law; and
- issue an advisory notice under schedule 8 of the 2014 Act.

We have not exercised any of these powers as part of our 2018/19 audit.

The 2014 Act also gives rights to local electors and other parties, such as the right to ask questions of the auditor and the right to make an objection to an item of account.

We have not received any questions or objections.

3. INTERNAL CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of our audit is to express an opinion on the financial statements. As part of our audit we have considered the internal controls in place relevant to the preparation of the financial statements. We do this in order to design audit procedures to allow us to express an opinion on the financial statement and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control, nor to identify any significant deficiencies in their design or operation.

The matters we report are limited to those deficiencies and other control recommendations that we have identified during our normal audit procedures and that we consider to be of sufficient importance to merit being reported. If we had performed more extensive procedures on internal control we might have identified more deficiencies to be reported or concluded that some of the reported deficiencies need not in fact have been reported. Our comments should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all deficiencies that may exist or improvements that could be made.

At this stage, based the audit work carried out, we have not identified any significant control deficiencies that we are required to report to you. We will update the Audit and Governance Committee at its 24 July 2019 meeting if there are any matters arising from that work that we are required to report.



4. SUMMARY OF MISSTATEMENTS

We set out below, based on the work completed to date, the material misstatements which have been amended in the final financial statements. There are no unadjusted misstatements above the level of our trivial threshold of £33k which we are required to report to you.

We will update the Audit and Governance Committee if any further reportable misstatements are identified from the remaining audit work in progress.

Material misstatements 2018/19

The table below summarises the amendments expected to be made to the draft financial statements.

		Draft Financial Statements £'000	Amended Financial Statements £'000
1	Balance Sheet - Net Pension Liability	56,332	59,661
	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Cost of Services: Service Costs	4,572	5,933
	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure: Net interest expense	1,271	1,289
	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure: Re- measurement of net Defined Benefit Pension Liability	7,164	9,114
<p>The draft financial statements have been amended to reflect updated figures as a result of a revised July 2019 actuarial valuation, taking into account assumptions for the potential impact of Guaranteed Minimum Pension equalisation and the outcome of the 'McCloud' judgement relating to the 2014 reforms of the LGPS benefit structure, and actual performance of the pension fund to 31 March 2019. There are also additional consequential changes to the Pension Fund note and primary statements, but none of these items impact the Council's useable balances carried forward.</p>			

5. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION

Introduction

We are required to form a conclusion as to whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out in order to form our conclusion, and sets out the criterion and sub-criteria that we are required to consider.

The overall criterion is that, 'in all significant respects, the Council had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.' To assist auditors in reaching a conclusion on this overall criterion, the following sub-criteria are set out by the NAO:

- Informed decision making
- Sustainable resource deployment
- Working with partners and other third parties

Our Approach

Our overall approach is set out in our Audit Strategy Memorandum and involves a detailed risk assessment at the planning stage to identify whether or not a Value for Money (VFM) exists. Risk, in the context of our VFM work, is the risk that we come to an incorrect conclusion rather than the risk of the arrangements in place at the Council being inadequate. As set out in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, for the 2018/19 financial year, we did not identify any significant risks to our VFM conclusion.

Matters kept under review

We did identify in our Audit Strategy Memorandum the following matters which we needed to keep under close review:

- Financial sustainability – the medium term financial position is uncertain (common to all bodies in the sector) and the demands/funding assumptions indicate a likely shortfall in future years. The Council is sighted on needing to be self-sufficient due to falling government grant levels.
- Capital Programme – the construction of the new Leisure Centre is estimated to cost £20m with around £13m spend expected in 2019/20.

Before drawing our conclusion, we have:

- Reviewed the 2018/19 financial performance and forecasts during the year and considered the Council's financial outturn position as presented in the financial statements.
- Reviewed the 2019/20:
 - Revenue and Capital budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Treasury Management Strategy, incorporating the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Capital and Investment Strategies
 - Commercial Strategy
- Considered the Council's latest financial monitoring information and its updated medium term outlook
- Discussed the new Leisure Centre project management arrangements and financial appraisals with managers and reviewed key reports.
- Updated our overall risk assessment for any new or emerging issues through discussions with management and updating our review of committee reports
- Reviewed the Council's Annual Governance Statement for any significant issues
- Considered the general findings from our audit work in other areas.

5. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION

Findings

Medium Term Financial Plan

The Council recognises the key issue is the management of general reserves to a level that ensures it remains financially resilient and able to deliver sustainable services. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) clearly sets out the key assumptions on both income and expenditure as well as the savings required over the period. The MTFP assumes that the authority will continue with its policy of not increasing the annual Council Tax charge, which results in an estimated £1.8million loss of income in 2019/20 and similar amounts in future years. This gap will need to continue to be met by savings or alternative income streams. The identification and delivery of savings will be challenging and further work is required to firm up specific saving plans for 2020/21 and beyond and the outcome of the Fair Funding review will help inform the Council's plans.

Capital Programme

We have discussed progress with management and considered the Cabinet reports in February 2019, October 2018 and November 2017, noting that the Council conducted an assessment of the bids which concluded that the selected option was consistent with the Council's Delivery Plan. The proposed management arrangement transfers risk for the care, maintenance and upkeep of the facilities for a period of 25 years.

From the work performed, no new significant VFM risks were identified and we have no matters to report.

Our overall Value for Money conclusion

We have completed our procedures and, as set out in our draft auditor's report included at Appendix B, we intend to issue an unqualified Value for Money conclusion for the 2018/19 financial year.



APPENDIX A

DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

Mazars LLP
45 Church Street
Birmingham
B2 3RT

17 July 2019

Dear Sirs

North West Leicestershire District Council - audit for year ended 31 March 2019

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of North West Leicestershire District Council (the Council) for the year ended 31 March 2019 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19 (the Code) and applicable law.

I confirm that the following representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy ourselves that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

My responsibility for the financial statements and accounting information

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information

I have provided you with:

- access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other material;
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

I confirm as Head of Finance that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information.

As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

Accounting records

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and committee meetings, have been made available to you.

Accounting policies

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with Code and International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

Accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value

I confirm that any significant assumptions used by the Council in making accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are reasonable.

Executive summary

Significant findings

Internal control
recommendations

Summary of
misstatements

Value for Money
conclusion

Appendices

APPENDIX A

DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

(CONTINUED)

Contingencies

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
- the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

Laws and regulations

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

Fraud and error

I acknowledge my responsibility as Head of Finance for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

I have disclosed to you:

- all the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- all knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
 - management and those charged with governance;
 - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
 - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Related party transactions

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances, have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the to you the requirements of the Code and applicable law.

I have disclosed identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

Future commitments

I am not aware of any plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

Subsequent events

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code and applicable law, require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly.

Prior Period Adjustment

The financial statements opening balances have been adjusted to reflect all known previous years' material errors and there are no omitted known material prior year misstatements.

APPENDIX A

DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER (CONTINUED)

Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council will not continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the accounts.

Unadjusted misstatements

I confirm that the effects of any uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Head of Finance

Executive summary

Significant findings

Internal control
recommendations

Summary of
misstatements

Value for Money
conclusion

Appendices

APPENDIX B

DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Independent auditor's report to the members of North West Leicestershire District Council

Report on the financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of North West Leicestershire District Council for the year ended 31 March 2019, which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of North West Leicestershire District Council as at 31st March 2019 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities section of our report. We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard as applicable to public interest entities, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Head of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Head of Finance has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Council's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The Head of Finance is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Annual Governance Statement and information included in the Financial Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.



APPENDIX B

DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

Responsibilities of the Head of Finance for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Head of Finance's Responsibilities, the Head of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Head of Finance is also responsible for such internal control as the Head of Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Head of Finance is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, unless the Council is informed of the intention for dissolution without transfer of services or function to another entity. The Head of Finance is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Conclusion on North West Leicestershire District Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

Conclusion

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2018, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, North West Leicestershire District Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Basis for conclusion

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued in November 2017, as to whether the Council had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider in satisfying ourselves whether the Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

APPENDIX B

DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We are required under section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of North West Leicestershire District Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 44 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Certificate

We certify that we have completed the audit of North West Leicestershire District Council in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice.

Mark Surridge

For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

45 Church Street
Birmingham
B3 2RT

July 2019

Executive summary

Significant findings

Internal control
recommendations

Summary of
misstatements

Value for Money
conclusion

Appendices

APPENDIX C INDEPENDENCE

As part of our ongoing risk assessment we monitor our relationships with you to identify any new actual or perceived threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We can confirm that no new threats to independence have been identified since issuing the Audit Strategy Memorandum and therefore we remain independent.



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