NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

EXTERNAL AUDITORS' REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE 2016/17

Joint Report of the Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer to the Fire and Rescue Authority

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Date: 22 September 2017

Purpose of Report:

To present the External Auditors' ISA 260 Report to Members, and to seek Members' approval of the management representation letter to the External Auditors.

CONTACT OFFICER

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The External Auditors are required by the International Standard on Auditing 260 (ISA 260) to communicate about the audit of the Authority's financial statements to those charged with governance. This communication is in the form of a written report, which is attached as Appendix A.

1.2 This covering report sets out the key points within the ISA 260 report. The principal purposes of the Auditors' report are:

- To present key issues identified during the audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017 and any material misstatements in the accounts;

- To report on any key issues for governance;

- To report on the Auditors' Value for Money conclusion;

- To give an "audit opinion" on the financial statements;

- To report on the implementation of any recommendations in the previous year's ISA 260 report;

- To seek approval to the management representation letter, which confirms the Authority's responsibilities and actions in relation to the financial statements.

1.3 The KPMG Manager of the Authority's audit will be attending the meeting to present the report and answer any questions arising, and will also provide Members with an update on the audit work completed since this report was written.

2. REPORT

2.1 The annual audit is in the completion stage and the ISA 260 report sets out the key issues to be considered by Members prior to the audit opinion being issued.

2.2 The ISA 260 report confirms that the Auditors expect to issue an unqualified audit opinion by the statutory deadline of 30 September 2017, and an unqualified Value for Money conclusion. In addition, the Auditors confirm that the Annual Governance Statement complies with the relevant CIPFA / SOLACE guidance on corporate governance.

2.3 The audit did not identify any material or significant errors in the financial statements. There were no presentational corrections required and no adjustments to an accounting policy.

2.4 There were three recommendations made in the ISA 260 report for 2015/16:

The closedown plan for 2016/17 should allow for an earlier closedown and preparation of the financial statements

The Finance Team have been under established, during the closedown of accounts. The Finance Team had identified works that could be done earlier, by working Saturdays and additional hours the Finance Team completed the accounts within the statutory deadline. The timetable and the tasks will be continually reviewed to ensure that improvements are implemented so an earlier deadline is met in 2017/18.

The Authority should ensure that there is an audit trail to evidence appropriate authorisation of all journals

A revised process has been put in place to record and evidenced manual authorisation.

Related party returns should be provided promptly in order to verify the accuracy of the related party transactions within the accounts

The Finance Team worked with the Clerk to the Fire Authority to ensure that all related party confirmations from Members are returned within an appropriate timescale.

2.5 The Auditors' report confirms that the Authority's accounts were completed by the statutory deadline of 30 June and presented for audit, that accounting processes and working papers were of good quality, and that Officers responded efficiently to audit queries. The statutory deadline for closing local authority accounts is being brought forward and will be 31 May for the 2017/18 accounts. The Finance Team has been working towards this earlier closedown since 2014/15 and this year had planned to complete the accounts by 2 June, this date was the date the Head of Finance left the organisation. However, the deadline was not achieved, but the accounts were completed by the statutory deadline of 30 June.

2.6 The ISA 260 report makes no recommendations for 2016/17

2.7 The ISA 260 report includes the Auditors' review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which was reported in September 2016.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The annual cost of external audit work this year is £31,050. There has been no increase in cost from 2015/16.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific human resources and learning and development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been carried out because this is a report about the External Audit of the financial statements and not a new policy.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The work of the External Auditors in their audit of the Authority's financial statements provides an independent view of the adequacy of internal controls, the accuracy of the final accounts and an assessment of the Authority's arrangements for achieving value for money. This provides Members with some assurance about the quality of financial management and financial reporting within the Authority.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members note the contents of the External Auditors' ISA 260 report, attached as Appendix A.

10.2 That Members approve the management representation letter to the External Auditors as set out in Appendix B.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Geoff Walker
TREASURER TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY

External audit report 2016/17

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

DRAFT

September 2017

Summary for Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service

Financial statements This document summarises the key findings in relation to our 2016-17 external audit at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services ('the Authority').

This report focusses on our on-site work which was completed in July 2017 on the Authority's significant risk areas, as well as other areas of your financial statements. No audit findings noted.

Subject to the necessary assurances being received from the auditors of the LGPS scheme we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's financial statements before the deadline of 30 September.

We are now in the completion stage of the audit and anticipate issuing our completion certificate and Annual Audit letter on [xxx date].

Use of resources We have completed our risk-based work to consider whether in all significant respects the Authority has proper arrangements to ensure it has taken properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. We have concluded that the Authority has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We therefore anticipate issuing an unqualified value for money opinion.

See further details on page 13.

Acknowledgements We would like to take this opportunity to thank officers and Members for their continuing help and co-operation throughout our audit work.

We ask the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service to note this report.

The key contacts in relation to our audit are:

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Contents

This report is addressed to Nottinghamshire and Rescue Services (the Authority) and has been prepared for the sole use of the Authority. We take no responsibility to any member of staff acting in their individual capacities, or to third parties. Public Sector Audit Appointments issued a document entitled Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies summarising where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from audited bodies. We draw your attention to this document which is available on Public Sector Audit Appointment's website (www.psaa.co.uk).

External auditors do not act as a substitute for the audited body's own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

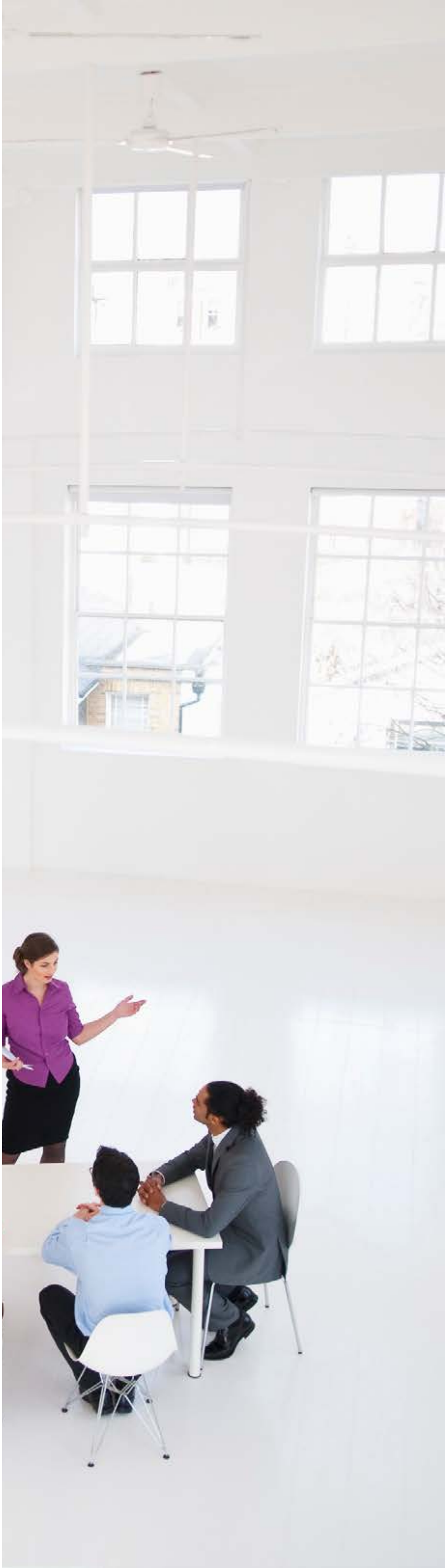
We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If you have any concerns or are dissatisfied with any part of KPMG's work, in the first instance you should contact Andrew Cardoza, the engagement lead to the Authority, who will try to resolve your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with your response please contact the national lead partner for all of KPMG's work under our contract with Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, Andrew Sayers (on 0207 694 8981, or by email to andrew.sayers@kpmg.co.uk). After this, if you are still dissatisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can access PSAA's complaints procedure by emailing generalenquiries@psaa.co.uk, by telephoning 020 7072 7445 or by writing to Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, 3rd Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3H.

Section one

Financial Statements

We anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's 2016/17 financial statements by 30 September 2017. We will also report that your Annual Governance Statement complies with the guidance issued by CIPFA/SOLACE (*'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'*) published in April 2016.

For the year ending 31 March 2017, the Authority has reported a surplus of £0.5m.



Significant audit risks

Our *External Audit Plan 2016/17* sets out our assessment of the Authority's significant audit risks. We have completed our testing in these areas and set out our evaluation following our work:

Significant audit risks	Work performed
Significant changes in the pension liability due to LGPS Triennial Valuation	**Why is this a risk?** During the year, the Pension Fund has undergone a triennial valuation with an effective date of 31 March 2016 in line with the *Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2013*. The share of pensions assets and liabilities for each admitted body is determined in detail, and a large volume of data is provided to the actuary to support this triennial valuation. There is a risk that the data provided to the actuary for the valuation exercise is inaccurate and that these inaccuracies affect the actuarial figures in the accounts. Most of the data is provided to the actuary by Nottinghamshire Pension Funds, who administer the Pension Fund. **Our work to address this risk** We have reviewed the process used to submit payroll data to the Pension Fund and tested the year-end submission process and other year-end controls, including the appointment of an independent actuary to confirm the appropriateness of the actuarial assumptions used by your actuary. We found no issues to note. We have also substantively agreed the total figures submitted to the actuary to the ledger and again identified no issues in relation to the LGPS scheme. We have engaged with your Pension Fund auditors to gain assurance over the pension figures.

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Considerations required by professional standards

Fraud risk of revenue recognition

Professional standards require us to make a rebuttable presumption that the fraud risk from revenue recognition is a significant risk.

In our *External Audit Plan 2016/17* we reported that we do not consider this to be a significant risk for Local Authorities as there is unlikely to be an incentive to fraudulently recognise revenue.

This is still the case. Since we have rebutted this presumed risk, there has been no impact on our audit work.

Management override of controls

Professional standards require us to communicate the fraud risk from management override of controls as significant because management is typically in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.

Our audit methodology incorporates the risk of management override as a default significant risk. We have not identified any specific additional risks of management override relating to this audit.

In line with our methodology, we carried out appropriate controls testing and substantive procedures, including over journal entries, accounting estimates and significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business, or are otherwise unusual.

There are no matters arising from this work that we need to bring to your attention.

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Other areas of audit focus

We identified one area of audit focus. This is not considered a significant risk as this is less likely to give rise to a material error. Nonetheless this is an area of importance where we would carry out substantive audit procedures to ensure that there is no risk of material misstatement.

Other areas of audit focus	Our work to address the areas
Disclosures associated with retrospective restatement of CIES, EFA and MiRS	**Background** CIPFA has introduced changes to the 2016/17 Local Government Accounting Code (Code): — Allowing local authorities to report on the same basis as they are organised by removing the requirement for the Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP) to be applied to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES); and — Introducing an Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) which provides a direct reconciliation between the way local authorities are funded and prepare their budget and the CIES. This analysis is supported by a streamlined Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS) and replaces the current segmental reporting note. The Authority was required to make a retrospective restatement of its CIES (cost of services) and the MiRS. New disclosure requirements and restatement of accounts require compliance with relevant guidance and correct application of applicable accounting standards. **What we have done** For the restatement, we have obtained an understanding of the methodology used to prepare the revised statements. We have also agreed figures disclosed to the Authority's general ledger and found no issues to note.

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Annual governance statement

We have reviewed the Authority's 2016/17 Annual Governance Statement and confirmed that:

— It complies with *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework published by CIPFA/SOLACE*; and

— It is not misleading or inconsistent with other information we are aware of from our audit of the financial statements.

Narrative report

We have reviewed the Authority's 2016/17 narrative report and have confirmed that it is materially consistent with the financial statements and our understanding of Authority.

We have noted that the narrative report does not fully comply with the Code requirements in that the use of both financial and non-financial performance indicators is expected.

We have recommended that further work is undertaken in future years to ensure that the narrative report is in line with the Code and best practice as set out by the Accounting Standards Board.

Proposed opinion and audit differences

Subject to all outstanding queries being resolved to our satisfaction, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's 2016/17 financial statements following approval of the Statement of Accounts by the Authority on 22 September 2017.

Audit differences

In accordance with ISA 260 we are required to report uncorrected audit differences to you. We also report any material misstatements which have been corrected and which we believe should be communicated to you to help you meet your governance responsibilities.

The final materiality (see Appendix 2 for more information on materiality) level for this year's audit was set at £1 million. Audit differences below £50,000 are not considered significant.

We did not identify any material misstatements.

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Accounts production and audit process

Our audit standards (*ISA 260*) require us to communicate our views on the significant qualitative aspects of the Authority's accounting practices and financial reporting.

We also assessed the Authority's process for preparing the accounts and its support for an efficient audit. The efficient production of the financial statements and good-quality working papers are critical to meeting the tighter deadlines.

Accounting practices and financial reporting

The Authority has recognised the additional pressures which the earlier closedown in 2017/18 will bring. We have been engaging with the Authority in the period leading up to the year end in order to proactively address issues as they emerge.

We consider the Authority's accounting practices appropriate.

Completeness of draft accounts

We received a complete set of draft accounts on 27 June 2017, which is in advance of the statutory deadline.

Quality of supporting working papers

We issued our *Accounts Audit Protocol 2016/17* ("Prepared by Client" request) on 03 May 2017 which outlines our documentation request. This helps the Authority and to provide audit evidence in line with our expectations.

We found that the improvements in quality introduced in the previous year had continued to be delivered in the current year, with the quality of audit evidence provided meeting our expectations as set out in our Accounts Audit Protocol 2016/17.

Response to audit queries

On average, Officers dealt with our audit queries within one work day of inquiry, in line with our expectations.

Prior year recommendations

As part of our audit we have specifically followed up the Authority's progress in addressing the recommendations we raised in last year's ISA 260 report.

The Authority have implemented all of the recommendations in our 2015/16 ISA 260 Report.

Controls over key financial systems

We have tested controls as part of our focus on significant audit risks and other parts of your key financial systems on which we rely as part of our audit. The strength of the control framework informs the substantive testing we complete during our final accounts visit.

Based on the work performed, we are satisfied that the controls are performing effectively. We are able to place reliance on the Authority's control framework.

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Completion

We confirm that we have complied with requirements on objectivity and independence in relation to this year's audit of the Authority's 2016/17 financial statements.

Before we can issue our opinion we require a signed management representation letter.

Once we have finalised our opinion and conclusion we will prepare our Annual Audit Letter and close our audit.

Declaration of independence and objectivity

As part of the finalisation process we are required to provide you with representations concerning our independence.

In relation to the audit of the financial statements of Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service for the year ending 31 March 2017, we confirm that there were no relationships between KPMG LLP and Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, its directors and senior management and its affiliates that we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on the objectivity and independence of the audit engagement lead and audit staff. We also confirm that we have complied with Ethical Standards and the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd requirements in relation to independence and objectivity.

We have provided a detailed declaration in Appendix 3 in accordance with ISA 260.

Management representations

You are required to provide us with representations on specific matters such as your financial standing and whether the transactions within the accounts are legal and unaffected by fraud. We have provided a template to the Finance Directory for presentation to the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service. We require a signed copy of your management representations before we issue our audit opinion.

Other matters

ISA 260 requires us to communicate to you by exception 'audit matters of governance interest that arise from the audit of the financial statements' which include:

— Significant difficulties encountered during the audit;

— Significant matters arising from the audit that were discussed, or subject to correspondence with management;

— Other matters, if arising from the audit that, in the auditor's professional judgement, are significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process; and

— Matters specifically required by other auditing standards to be communicated to those charged with governance (e.g. significant deficiencies in internal control; issues relating to fraud, compliance with laws and regulations, subsequent events, non disclosure, related party, public interest reporting, questions/objections, opening balances etc.).

There are no others matters which we wish to draw to your attention in addition to those highlighted in this report or our previous reports relating to the audit of the Authority's 2016/17 financial statements.

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Section two

Value for money

Our 2016/17 VFM conclusion considers whether the Authority had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

We have concluded that the Authority has made proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

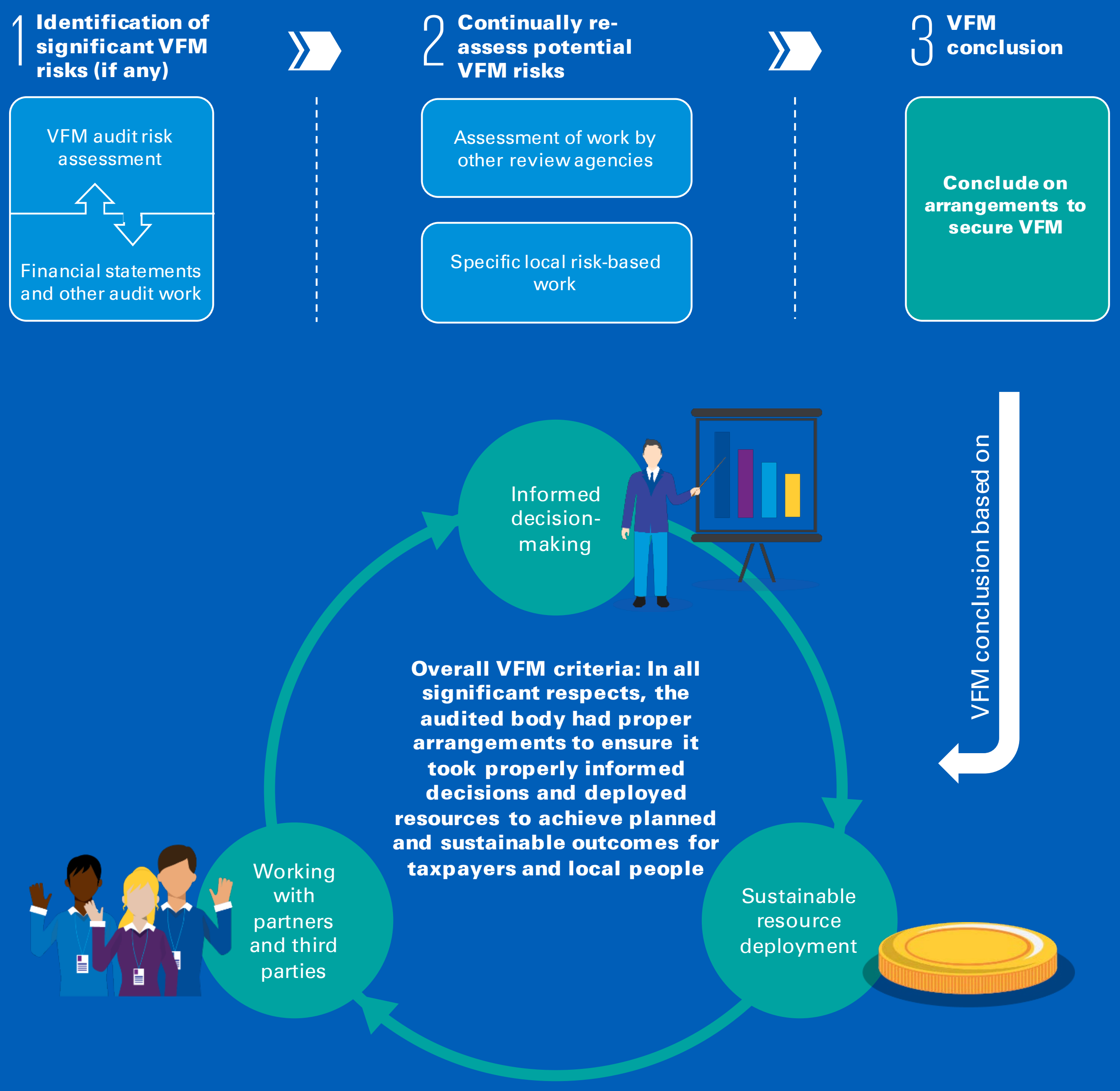
VFM conclusion

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 requires auditors of local government bodies to be satisfied that the authority 'has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources'.

This is supported by the Code of Audit Practice, published by the NAO in April 2015, which requires auditors to 'take into account their knowledge of the relevant local sector as a whole, and the audited body specifically, to identify any risks that, in the auditor's judgement, have the potential to cause the auditor to reach an inappropriate conclusion on the audited body's arrangements.'

Our VFM conclusion considers whether the Authority had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

We follow a risk based approach to target audit effort on the areas of greatest audit risk.



The table below summarises our assessment of the individual VFM risk identified against the three sub-criteria. This directly feeds into the overall VFM criteria and our value for money opinion.

VFM assessment summary			
VFM risk	**Informed decision-making**	**Sustainable resource deployment**	**Working with partners and third parties**
1. Financial resilience in the local and national economy	✓	✓	✓
Overall summary	✓	✓	✓

In consideration of the above, we have concluded that in 2016/17, the Authority has made proper arrangements to ensure it took properly-informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

Further details on the work done and our assessment are provided on the following pages.

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Significant VFM risks

We have identified a single significant VFM risk. In all cases we are satisfied that external or internal scrutiny provides sufficient assurance that the Authority's current arrangements in relation to the risk area is adequate.

Significant VFM risks	Work performed
1. Financial resilience in the local and national economy	**Why is this a risk?** There has been a significant shift in the national outlook over the last 12 months, primarily driven by the outcome of the referendum on 23 June 2016 on the UK's membership of the European Union. Consequently GDP growth forecasts have been revised downwards, which potentially reduces the level of any growth in business rates income. Inflationary pressures, service pressures, and a reduction in the local government finance settlement will impact on the Authority's finances. In September 2016, the Authority published a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016/17 –2019/20 and this Sustainability Plan sets out how Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) plans to reduce its cost base over the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20 in order to balance its revenue budget in the context of an expected reduction in external funding. This plan is designed to meet the Home Office requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to publish an Efficiency Plan in return for a four year funding settlement. A budget deficit of £526k will need to be eliminated in order for the Fire Authority to approve a balanced budget for 2017/2018. This is currently being supported by reserves to allow time for plans to be put in place to meet the shortfall. Even when this has been achieved, there will be a requirement to find further savings of approximately £1.2m by 2019/2020 (savings of £1.7m in total). This is a challenge that the Authority are preparing for. Reserves are available to support the Authority with future investments and savings plans. At 31 March 2016, General Reserves stood at £7.406m and earmarked reserves totalled £3.501m. The revenue outturn underspend of £431k will increase General Reserves and give a new total of £7.837m as at 31 March 2017. During the year, net changes were made to earmarked reserves of £1,393k, giving a balance as at 31 March 2017 of £4.894m. **Summary of our work** We have reviewed the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The key findings are: The Authority has constructed its Medium Term Financial Strategy on the key assumption of cost saving of £300k on collaborative opportunities,£350k on Procurement, £150 on maximising the benefit and £1,100k value of assets and redesign of Service Delivery. We have assessed the arrangements put in place by the Authority to maintain its record of meeting efficiency savings to address national funding changes, by relying on our accounts audit work where relevant, underpinned by a review of the Authority's budget setting process, financial management processes, and discussions with the Senior Management team.

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Appendices

Follow-up of prior year recommendations

In the previous year, we raised 3 recommendations which we reported in our *External Audit Report 2015/16 (ISA 260)*.

We are pleased to report that the Authority has implemented these recommendations.

Each recommendation is assessed during our 2016/17 work, and we have obtained the recommendation's status to date. We have also obtained Management's assessment of each outstanding recommendation.

Below is a summary of the prior year's recommendations.

2015/16 recommendations status summary

Priority	Number raised	Number implemented / superseded	Number outstanding
High	0	0	**0**
Medium	3	3	**0**
Low	0	0	**0**
Total	**3**	**3**	**0**

Medium priority

1. Accounts Production Process

The deadline for the production of the accounts is moving to 31 May with effect from 2017/18. The Authority now only has one more year to bring forward the production of the accounts in light of this change. This will need to be done whilst ensuring that the quality of the accounts is not diminished.

Recommendation

The closedown plan for 2016/17 should allow for an earlier closedown and preparation of the financial statements.

Management original response

Accepted – we will build on the work this year and liaise with KPMG to ensure a hard close on the audit process.

Owner

Director of Finance

Original deadline

March 2017

KPMG's July 2017 assessment

Fully implemented

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Medium priority

2. Journals authorisation

Our testing identified two journals without evidence of authorisation.

Recommendation

The Authority should ensure that there is an audit trail to evidence appropriate authorisation of all journals.

Management original response

For those few journal types where electronic authorisation does not take place, a revised process has been put in place to record evidence of manual authorisation

Owner

Head of Finance

Original deadline

September 2016

KPMG's July 2017 assessment

Fully implemented

Medium priority

3. Related Party Returns

Two members did not return their forms to confirm their related party transactions until very late in the audit process.

Recommendation

Related party returns should be provided promptly in order to verify the accuracy of the related party transactions within the accounts.

Management original response

The Finance team will work with the Clerk to the Fire Authority in future to ensure that all related party confirmations from Members are returned within an appropriate timescale

Owner

Head of Finance

Original deadline

March 2017

KPMG's July 2017 assessment

Fully implemented

KPMG

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Materiality and reporting of audit differences

The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and includes consideration of three aspects: materiality by value, nature and context.

Material errors by value are those which are simply of significant numerical size to distort the reader's perception of the financial statements. Our assessment of the threshold for this depends upon the size of key figures in the financial statements, as well as other factors such as the level of public interest in the financial statements.

Errors which are material by nature may not be large in value, but may concern accounting disclosures of key importance and sensitivity, for example the salaries of senior staff.

Errors that are material by context are those that would alter key figures in the financial statements from one result to another – for example, errors that change successful performance against a target to failure.

We used the same planning materiality reported in our External Audit Plan 2016/17, presented to you in February 2017.

Materiality for the Authority's accounts was set at £1 million, which equates to around 1.9% percent of gross expenditure. We design our procedures to detect errors in specific accounts at a lower level of precision.

Reporting to the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service

Whilst our audit procedures are designed to identify misstatements which are material to our opinion on the financial statements as a whole, we nevertheless report to the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service any misstatements of lesser amounts to the extent that these are identified by our audit work.

Under *ISA 260*, we are obliged to report omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. *ISA 260* defines 'clearly trivial' as matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any quantitative or qualitative criteria.

ISA 450 requires us to request that uncorrected misstatements are corrected.

In the context of the Authority, we propose that an individual difference could normally be considered to be clearly trivial if it is less than £50,000 for the Authority.

Where management have corrected material misstatements identified during the course of the audit, we will consider whether those corrections should be communicated to the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service to assist it in fulfilling its governance responsibilities.

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Declaration of independence and objectivity

Auditors appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd must comply with the Code of Audit Practice (the 'Code') which states that:

> *"The auditor should carry out their work with integrity, objectivity and independence, and in accordance with the ethical framework applicable to auditors, including the ethical standards for auditors set by the Financial Reporting Council, and any additional requirements set out by the auditor's recognised supervisory body, or any other body charged with oversight of the auditor's independence. The auditor should be, and should be seen to be, impartial and independent. Accordingly, the auditor should not carry out any other work for an audited body if that work would impair their independence in carrying out any of their statutory duties, or might reasonably be perceived as doing so."*

In considering issues of independence and objectivity we consider relevant professional, regulatory and legal requirements and guidance, including the provisions of the Code, the detailed provisions of the Statement of Independence included within the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd Terms of Appointment ('Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd Guidance') and the requirements of APB Ethical Standard 1 Integrity, Objectivity and Independence ('Ethical Standards').

The Code states that, in carrying out their audit of the financial statements, auditors should comply with auditing standards currently in force, and as may be amended from time to time. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd guidance requires appointed auditors to follow the provisions of *ISA (UK&I) 260 'Communication of Audit Matters with Those Charged with Governance'* that are applicable to the audit of listed companies. This means that the appointed auditor must disclose in writing:

— Details of all relationships between the auditor and the client, its directors and senior management and its affiliates, including all services provided by the audit firm and its network to the client, its directors and senior management and its affiliates, that the auditor considers may reasonably be thought to bear on the auditor's objectivity and independence.

— The related safeguards that are in place.

— The total amount of fees that the auditor and the auditor's network firms have charged to the client and its affiliates for the provision of services during the reporting period, analysed into appropriate categories, for example, statutory audit services, further audit services, tax advisory services and other non-audit services. For each category, the amounts of any future services which have been contracted or where a written proposal has been submitted are separately disclosed. We do this in our Annual Audit Letter.

Appointed auditors are also required to confirm in writing that they have complied with Ethical Standards and that, in the auditor's professional judgement, the auditor is independent and the auditor's objectivity is not compromised, or otherwise declare that the auditor has concerns that the auditor's objectivity and independence may be compromised and explaining the actions which necessarily follow from his. These matters should be discussed with the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service. Ethical Standards require us to communicate to those charged with governance in writing at least annually all significant facts and matters, including those related to the provision of non-audit services and the safeguards put in place that, in our professional judgement, may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence and the objectivity of the Engagement Lead and the audit team.

General procedures to safeguard independence and objectivity

KPMG LLP is committed to being and being seen to be independent. As part of our ethics and independence policies, all KPMG LLP Audit Partners and staff annually confirm their compliance with our Ethics and Independence Manual including in particular that they have no prohibited shareholdings.

Our Ethics and Independence Manual is fully consistent with the requirements of the Ethical Standards issued by the UK Auditing Practices Board. As a result we have underlying safeguards in place to maintain independence through: Instilling professional values, Communications, Internal accountability, Risk management and Independent reviews.

We would be happy to discuss any of these aspects of our procedures in more detail.

Auditor declaration

In relation to the audit of the financial statements of Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service for the financial year ending 31 March 2017, we confirm that there were no relationships between KPMG LLP and Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, its directors and senior management and its affiliates that we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on the objectivity and independence of the audit engagement lead and audit staff. We also confirm that we have complied with Ethical Standards and the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) requirements in relation to independence and objectivity.

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Audit fees

Audit fees

As communicated to you in our External Audit Plan 2016/17, our scale fee for the audits are:

— Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service: **£31,050** plus VAT *(£31,050 in 2015/16)*

However, we will be proposing an additional fee due to additional work undertaken in relation to the CIES restatement,. We will discuss these fees with the Head of Finance and this will also be subject to PSAA determination/approval.

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APPENDIX B

Tel: 0115 8388661
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Mr Cardoza
KPMG LLP
One Snowhill
Snow Hill, Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6GH

22 September 2017

Dear Mr Cardoza

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority ("the Authority"), for the year ended 31 March 2017, for the purpose of expressing an opinion:

i. as to whether these financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2017 and of the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended;

ii. whether the financial statements have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.

These financial statements comprise the Authority Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes.

The Authority confirms that the representations it makes in this letter are in accordance with the definitions set out in the Appendix to this letter.

The Authority confirms that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as it considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing itself:

Financial statements

1. The Authority has fulfilled its responsibilities, as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, for the preparation of financial statements that:

   i. give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2017 and of the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended;

   ii. have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.

   The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2. Measurement methods and significant assumptions used by the Authority in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

3. All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which IAS 10 *Events after the reporting period* requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

4. The effects of uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole. A list of the uncorrected misstatements is attached to this representation letter.

Information provided

5. The Authority has provided you with:

    - access to all information of which it is aware, that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements, such as records, documentation and other matters;
    - additional information that you have requested from the Authority for the purpose of the audit; and
    - unrestricted access to persons within the Authority and the Group from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

6. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

7. The Authority confirms the following:

    i) The Authority has disclosed to you the results of its assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

    Included in the Appendix to this letter are the definitions of fraud, including misstatements arising from fraudulent financial reporting and from misappropriation of assets.

    ii) The Authority has disclosed to you all information in relation to:

    a) Fraud or suspected fraud that it is aware of and that affects the Authority and involves:
        - management;
        - employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
        - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements; and

    b) allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Authority's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

    In respect of the above, the Authority acknowledges its responsibility for such internal control as it determines necessary for the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In particular, the Authority acknowledges its responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

8. The Authority has disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

9. The Authority has disclosed to you and has appropriately accounted for and/or disclosed in the financial statements, in accordance with IAS 37 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*, all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

10. The Authority has disclosed to you the identity of the Authority's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which it is aware. All related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with IAS 24 *Related Party Disclosures*.

11. The Authority confirms that:

    a) The financial statements disclose all of the key risk factors, assumptions made and uncertainties surrounding the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern as required to provide a true and fair view.
    b) Any uncertainties disclosed are not considered to be material and therefore do not cast significant doubt on the ability of the Authority to continue as a going concern.

12. On the basis of the process established by the Authority and having made appropriate enquiries, the Authority is satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of defined benefit obligations are consistent with its knowledge of the business and are in accordance with the requirements of IAS 19 (revised) Employee Benefits.

    The Authority further confirms that:

    a) all significant retirement benefits, including any arrangements that are:
        - statutory, contractual or implicit in the employer's actions;
        - arise in the UK and the Republic of Ireland or overseas;
        - funded or unfunded; and
        - approved or unapproved,

    have been identified and properly accounted for; and

    b) all plan amendments, curtailments and settlements have been identified and properly accounted for.

This letter was tabled and agreed at the meeting of the Authority on 22nd September 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Brian Grocock	Geoff Walker
CHAIR OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY	TREASURER TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY

Appendix to the Authority Representation Letter of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority: Definitions

Financial Statements

A complete set of financial statements comprises:

- A Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the period;
- A Balance Sheet as at the end of the period;
- A Movement in Reserves Statement for the period;
- A Cash Flow Statement for the period; and
- Notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

A local authority is required to present group accounts in addition to its single entity accounts where required by chapter nine of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.
A housing authority must present:

- a HRA Income and Expenditure Statement; and
- a Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement.

A billing authority must present a Collection Fund Statement for the period showing amounts required by statute to be debited and credited to the Collection Fund.

A penson fund administering authority must prepare Pension Fund accounts in accordance with Chapter 6.5 of the Code of Practice.

An entity may use titles for the statements other than those used in IAS 1. For example, an entity may use the title 'statement of comprehensive income' instead of 'statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income'.

Material Matters

Certain representations in this letter are described as being limited to matters that are material.

IAS 1.7 and IAS 8.5 state that:

> "Material omissions or misstatements of items are material if they could, individually or collectively, influence the economic decisions that users make on the basis of the financial statements. Materiality depends on the size and nature of the omission or misstatement judged in the surrounding circumstances. The size or nature of the item, or a combination of both, could be the determining factor."

Fraud

Fraudulent financial reporting involves intentional misstatements including omissions of amounts or disclosures in financial statements to deceive financial statement users.

Misappropriation of assets involves the theft of an entity's assets. It is often accompanied by false or misleading records or documents in order to conceal the fact that the assets are missing or have been pledged without proper authorisation.

Error

An error is an unintentional misstatement in financial statements, including the omission of an amount or a disclosure.

Prior period errors are omissions from, and misstatements in, the entity's financial statements for one or more prior periods arising from a failure to use, or misuse of, reliable information that:

a) was available when financial statements for those periods were authorised for issue; and
b) could reasonably be expected to have been obtained and taken into account in the preparation and presentation of those financial statements.

Such errors include the effects of mathematical mistakes, mistakes in applying accounting policies, oversights or misinterpretations of facts, and fraud.

Management

For the purposes of this letter, references to "management" should be read as "management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance".

Related Party and Related Party Transaction

Related party:

A related party is a person or entity that is related to the entity that is preparing its financial statements (referred to in IAS 24 *Related Party Disclosures* as the "reporting entity").

a) A person or a close member of that person's family is related to a reporting entity if that person:
    i. has control or joint control over the reporting entity;
    ii. has significant influence over the reporting entity; or
    iii. is a member of the key management personnel of the reporting entity or of a parent of the reporting entity.
b) An entity is related to a reporting entity if any of the following conditions applies:
    i. The entity and the reporting entity are members of the same group (which means that each parent, subsidiary and fellow subsidiary is related to the others).
    ii. One entity is an associate or joint venture of the other entity (or an associate or joint venture of a member of a group of which the other entity is a member).
    iii. Both entities are joint ventures of the same third party.
    iv. One entity is a joint venture of a third entity and the other entity is an associate of the third entity.
    v. The entity is a post-employment benefit plan for the benefit of employees of either the reporting entity or an entity related to the reporting entity. If the reporting entity is itself such a plan, the sponsoring employers are also related to the reporting entity.
    vi. The entity is controlled, or jointly controlled by a person identified in (a).
    vii. A person identified in (a)(i) has significant influence over the entity or is a member of the key management personnel of the entity (or of a parent of the entity).

Key management personnel in a local authority context are all chief officers (or equivalent), elected members, the chief executive of the authority and other persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the authority, including the oversight of these activities.

A reporting entity is exempt from the disclosure requirements of IAS 24.18 in relation to related party transactions and outstanding balances, including commitments, with:

a) a government that has control, joint control or significant influence over the reporting entity; and
b) another entity that is a related party because the same government has control, joint control or significant influence over both the reporting entity and the other entity.

Related party transaction:

A transfer of resources, services or obligations between a reporting entity and a related party, regardless of whether a price is charged.