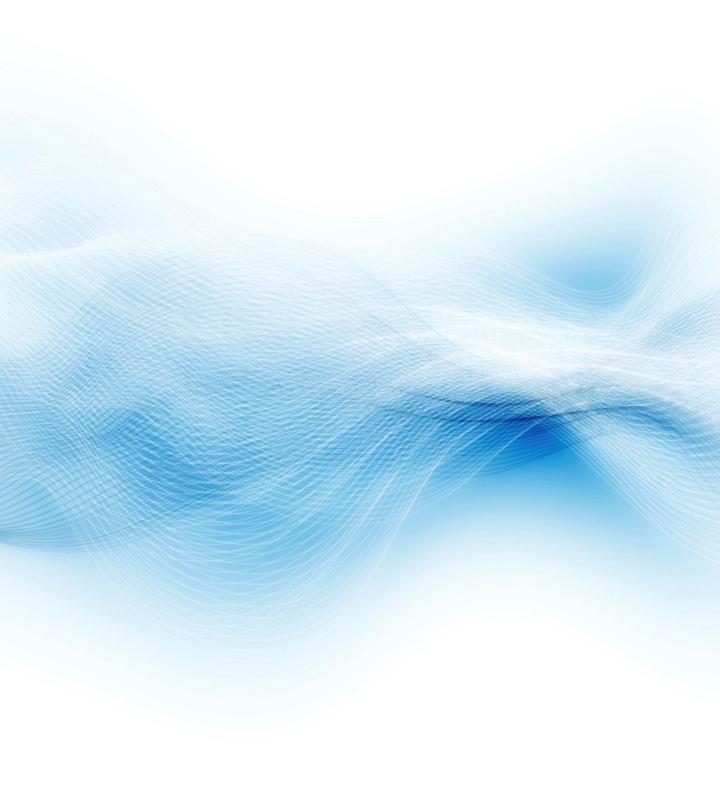
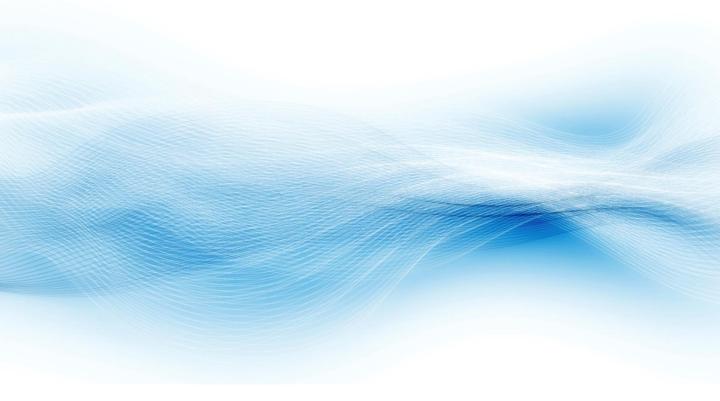
# Audit Completion Report Greater Manchester Pension Fund

Year ending 31 March 2019







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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 Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council as Administering Authority of Greater Manchester Pension Fund are prepared for the sole use of the Council / Authority and we take no responsibility to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party.

Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an international advisory and accountancy group. Mazars LLP is registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.





Mazars LLP
One St. Peters' Square
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Members of the Audit Panel Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council Dukinfield Town Hall King Street Dukinfield SK16 4LA

[Date]

**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 12 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 [RI telephone number].

Yours faithfully

**Karen Murray** Mazars LLP



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Purpose of this report and principal conclusions

The Audit Completion Report sets out the findings from our audit of Greater Manchester Pension Fund ('the Fund') for the year ended 31 March 2019, and forms the basis for discussion at the Audit Panel meeting on 22 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 of this report outline the detailed findings from our work on the financial statements, and also includes our conclusions on the audit risks and areas of management judgement in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, which include:

- Management override of control
- Valuation of Unquoted Investments

#### Status of our work

As we outline on the following page, 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 an unqualified opinion, without modification, on the financial statements. Our proposed audit opinion is included in the draft auditor's report in Appendix B.

Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) We anticipate completing our work on your WGA submission, in conjunction with the work for Tameside MBC as Administering Authority, in line with the group instructions issued by the NAO, by the deadline of 31 August 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 Fund and to consider any objection made to the accounts. We have received no such objections or questions in relation to the Fund from local electors. At the time of drafting there is still the opportunity for objections to be made and we will update the Panel on the final position and consideration.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** 1.

#### Status of our audit work

We have substantially completed our work on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019. At the time of preparing this report there are no significant matters outstanding, however, there are a number of items that remain to be completed:

- receipt of the final, signed Statement of Accounts;
- receipt of the final, signed Letter of Representation; and
- receipt of the responses from management and Chairs of relevant Panels in respect of fraud awareness.

We will provide the Audit Panel with an update in relation to the few minor outstanding matters as part of the presentation of this report, prior to signing the auditor's report.

#### Our audit approach

We provided details of our intended audit approach in our Audit Strategy Memorandum in February 2019. We have not made any changes to our audit approach since we presented our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

#### Materiality

#### **Overall Materiality**

We set overall materiality at the planning stage of the audit at £225m using a benchmark of 1% of net assets. Our final assessment of materiality, based on the final financial statements and qualitative factors we considered it appropriate to maintain the reported figure of £225m, using the same benchmark.

#### Fund Account (specific materiality)

We set specific materiality for the Fund Account at the planning stage of the audit as £80m, using a benchmark of 10% of benefits payable. Our final assessment of materiality, based on the final financial statements and qualitative factors is £80m, using the same benchmark.

#### **Triviality**

We set our trivial threshold, the level under which individual errors are not communicated to the Audit Panel, at £7m based on 3% of overall materiality.

#### Misstatements and internal control recommendations

Section 3 sets out the internal control recommendations that we make, together with an update on any prior year recommendations.

Section 4 outlines the misstatements noted as part of our audit as at the time of issuing this report. If any additional misstatements are noted on completion of the outstanding work, these will be reported to the Audit Panel in a follow-up letter.



#### 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Set out below are the significant findings from our audit. These findings 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 7 we have concluded whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework and commented on any significant accounting policy changes that have been made during the year;
- any further significant matters discussed with management; 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 Fund's financial statements that required special audit consideration. Although we report identified significant risks at the planning stage of the audit 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

#### Description of the risk

In all entities, 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, we consider there to be a risk of material misstatement due to fraud and thus a significant risk on all audits.

#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk through performing audit work in respect of:

- Accounting estimates impacting on amounts included in the financial statements;
- Consideration of identified significant transactions outside the normal course of business; and
- Journals recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in preparation of the financial statements.

#### **Audit conclusion**

We have not identified any instances of the override of controls. We have no issues which we would like to bring to your attention in respect of this identified significant risk.



# 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

#### Significant risk

Valuation of unquoted investments for which a market price is not readily available

#### Description of the risk

The values for certain classes of investment assets held by the Fund by their nature include more subjective and inherent risks of material misstatement. This is particularly applicable to those assets which are based on unobservable inputs, and also the level of professional judgement, required when calculating capital statements and net asset values.

#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk by completing the following procedures:

- agree the valuation to supporting documentation including investment manager valuation statements and cash flows for any adjustments made to the investment manager valuation;
- agree the investment manager valuation to audited accounts or other independent supporting documentation, where available;
- where audited accounts are available, check that they are supported by a clear opinion; and
- where available, review independent control assurance reports to identify any exceptions that could present a risk of material misstatement in the Fund's financial statements.

#### **Audit conclusion**

We have no issues which we would like to bring to your attention in respect of this identified significant risk.



#### SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED) 2.

#### Qualitative aspects of the Fund's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Fund'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 Fund's circumstances.

We have undertaken procedures and testing sufficient to understand and confirm that the Fund has appropriately prepared financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 on the basis of going concern. We are also satisfied that the audit of said financial statements provides adequate assurance over the revenue recognition practices and reported results for the year.

Draft accounts were received from the Fund on 28 May 2019 and were of a good quality, supported by a set of comprehensive and good quality working papers.

#### Significant matters discussed with management

There have been no significant or material items where we have required to hold formal discussions with management in relation to the Fund's financial statements.

#### 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.

# 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

#### 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 at the date of drafting the report.

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. At the time or drafting the report for the Panel, the final date for potential objections has not yet passed and we will provide a verbal update at the Panel meeting.

#### Modifications required to our audit report

We have not identified any issues that have led us to conclude that we need to issue a modified audit opinion.

#### 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 reported 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.

Our findings and recommendations are set out below. We have assigned priority rankings to each of them to reflect the importance that we consider each poses to your organisation and, hence, our recommendation in terms of the urgency of required action. In summary, the matters arising fall into the following categories:

Priority ranking	prity ranking Description	
1 (high)	In our view, there is potential for financial loss, damage to reputation or loss of information. This may have implications for the achievement of business strategic objectives. The recommendation should be taken into consideration by management immediately.	0
2 (medium)	In our view, there is a need to strengthen internal control or enhance business efficiency. The recommendations should be actioned in the near future.	1
3 (low)	In our view, internal control should be strengthened in these additional areas when practicable.	0

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#### INTERNAL CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED) 3.

#### Other deficiencies in internal control - Level 2

#### **Description of deficiency**

Investment valuations for a small proportion of the portfolio, within quoted investments, had been reported on an incorrect basis because the wrong market pricing had been applied by HSBC.

#### Potential effects

Had the wrong market pricing been applied to all of the quoted investments in the portfolio, there could be a potential material error in the value included in the accounts.

#### Recommendation

The Fund should liaise with and confirm that both external valuation specialists, fund managers, and custodians are using the correct exchange price when reporting.

#### Management response

The Fund has engaged a new supplier for the investment accounting function, from HSBC to Northern Trust (the Fund's Custodian). The Fund is also conducting a review of the internal processes in place for the reconciliation of reports from Northern Trust and the Fund Managers.

Management consider that these two measures will strengthen the arrangements in place, and significantly reduce the risk of incorrect reporting of the value of investments.



### 4. SUMMARY OF MISSTATEMENTS

We set out below the misstatements identified for adjustment during the course of the audit, above the level of trivial threshold of £7m.

The first table outlines the misstatements that were identified during the course of our audit which management has assessed as not being material, either individually or in aggregate, to the financial statements and does not currently plan to adjust.

The second table outlines the misstatements that have been adjusted by management during the course of the audit.

#### Unadjusted misstatements 2018/19

11

		Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)	Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)
1	Dr: Net Assets Statement Cr: Change in Market Value			11,436	11,436

The Fund has been provided with a small sample of the investment portfolio where the incorrect quoted investment pricing had been selected. The difference between the mid and bid prices represents 0.06% of the assets where it has been incorrectly identified and reported.

Total unadjusted misstatements 11,436 11,436

Value for Money conclusion

Summary of misstatements

Internal control recommendations

#### SUMMARY OF MISSTATEMENTS (CONTINUED) 4.

#### Disclosure amendments

During the course of the audit we have not identified any significant amendments to the disclosures included in the Fund's accounts. We have recommended a small number of enhancements to the disclosures included, to improve transparency and clarity of the existing

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# APPENDIX A DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council Dukinfield Town Hall King Street Dukinfield SK16 4LA

[Date]

Dear Karen

#### Greater Manchester Pension Fund - audit for year ended 31 March 2019

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Greater Manchester Pension Fund, administered by Tameside Metropolitan Borough 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 vou.

#### 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 Pension Fund and Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

I confirm as Director 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 relevant Pension Fund and Council Panel meetings and other 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 Pension Fund and 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 Pension Fund and Council in making accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are reasonable.

#### 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.

Executive summary Significant findings Internal control recommendations Summary of misstatements Value for Money conclusion Appendices



# APPENDIX A DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

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 Pension Fund and 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 Pension Fund and Council have 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 Director 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 Pension Fund and 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 Pension Fund and 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 requirements of the Code and applicable law.

I have disclosed to you the identity of the Pension Fund and 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.



# APPENDIX A DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

#### Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Pension Fund and 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 the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Director of Finance

Chair of Audit Panel



# APPENDIX B DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT

#### Independent auditor's report to the members of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council Report on the financial statements

#### Opinion on the financial statements of Greater Manchester Pension Fund

We have audited the financial statements of Greater Manchester Pension Fund ('the Pension Fund') for the year ended 31 March 2019, which comprise the Fund Account, the Net Assets 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 transactions of Greater Manchester Pension Fund during the year ended 31 March 2019, and the amount and disposition of the Pension Fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2019; 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, as administering authority for the Pension Fund, 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 Director of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or the Director of Finance has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Pension Fund'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 Director of Finance is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, 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.

#### Responsibilities of the Director of Finance for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Director of Finance's Responsibilities, the Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the Pension Fund's 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 Director of Finance is also responsible for such internal control as the Director 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 Director 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 Director of Finance is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Pension Fund to prepare the accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

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# APPENDIX B DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT

#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Pension Fund's 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.

#### Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, as a body and as administering authority for the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, 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.

[Signature]

Karen Murray For and on behalf of Mazars LLP Address [Insert date]



# 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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Appendices

Value for Money conclusion

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