

Audit Strategy Memorandum

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Year ending 31 March 2020





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This document is to be regarded as confidential to Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. It has been prepared for the sole use of the Audit Panel as the appropriate sub-committee charged with governance. No responsibility is accepted to any other person in respect of the whole or part of its contents. Our written consent must first be obtained before this document, or any part of it, is disclosed to a third party.

Members of the Audit Panel
Tameside Metropolitan Council
Tameside One
Market Place
Ashton Under Lyne
OL6 6BH

28 January 2020

Dear Members of the Audit Panel

Audit Strategy Memorandum – Year ending 31 March 2020

We are pleased to present our Audit Strategy Memorandum for Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council for the year ending 31 March 2020

The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit approach, highlight significant audit risks and areas of key judgements and provide you with the details of our audit team. As it is a fundamental requirement that an auditor is, and is seen to be, independent of its clients, Section 8 of this document also summarises our considerations and conclusions on our independence as auditors.

We consider two-way communication with you to be key to a successful audit and important in:

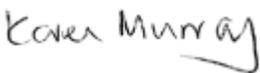
- reaching a mutual understanding of the scope of the audit and the responsibilities of each of us;
- sharing information to assist each of us to fulfil our respective responsibilities;
- providing you with constructive observations arising from the audit process; and
- ensuring that we, as external auditors, gain an understanding of your attitude and views in respect of the internal and external operational, financial, compliance and other risks facing Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council which may affect the audit, including the likelihood of those risks materialising and how they are monitored and managed.

This document, which has been prepared following our initial planning discussions with management, is the basis for discussion of our audit approach, and any questions or input you may have on our approach or role as auditor.

This document also contains specific appendices that outline our key communications with you during the course of the audit, and forthcoming accounting issues and other issues that may be of interest.

Client service is extremely important to us and we strive to continuously provide technical excellence with the highest level of service quality, together with continuous improvement to exceed your expectations so, if you have any concerns or comments about this document or audit approach, please contact me on 0161 238 9248.

Yours faithfully



Karen Murray
Partner and Engagement Lead
Mazars LLP

1. ENGAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES SUMMARY

Overview of engagement

We are appointed to perform the external audit of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (the Council) for the year to 31 March 2020. The scope of our engagement is set out in the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies, issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) available from the PSAA website: <https://www.psaa.co.uk/audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities/>

Our responsibilities

Our responsibilities are principally derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO), as outlined below:

Audit opinion

We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements.

Our audit is planned and performed so to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material error and give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the Council for the year.

Value for Money

We are required to conclude whether the Council has proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We discuss our approach to Value for Money work further in section 6 of this report.

Reporting to the NAO

We report to the NAO on the consistency of the Council's financial statements with its Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) submission.

Electors' rights

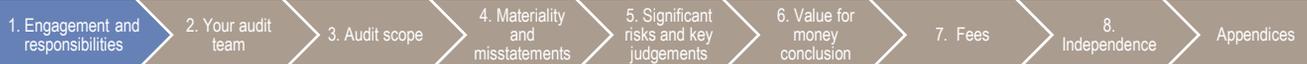
The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and consider any objection made to the accounts. We also have a broad range of reporting responsibilities and powers that are unique to the audit of local authorities in the United Kingdom.

Our audit does not relieve management or those charged with governance, of their responsibilities. The responsibility for safeguarding assets and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with both those charged with governance and management. In accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), we plan and perform our audit so as to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements taken as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. However our audit should not be relied upon to identify all such misstatements.

As part of our audit procedures in relation to fraud we are required to enquire of those charged with governance as to their knowledge of instances of fraud, the risk of fraud and their views on management controls that mitigate the fraud risks.

The Council is required to prepare its financial statements on a going concern basis by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. As auditors, we are required to consider the appropriateness of the use of the going concern assumption in the preparation of the financial statements and the adequacy of disclosures made.

For the purpose of our audit, we have identified the Audit Panel as those charged with governance.



2. YOUR AUDIT ENGAGEMENT TEAM



- **Karen Murray, Partner and Audit Engagement Lead**
- E: Karen.murray@mazars.co.uk
- T: 0161 238 9248 M: 07721 234043



- **Stephen Nixon, Senior Manager**
- E: Stephen.nixon@mazars.co.uk
- T: 0161 238 9233 M: 07909 986191

3. AUDIT SCOPE, APPROACH AND TIMELINE

Audit scope

Our audit approach is designed to provide an audit that complies with all professional requirements.

Our audit of the financial statements will be conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), relevant ethical and professional standards, our own audit approach and in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work is focused on those aspects of your business which we consider to have a higher risk of material misstatement, such as those affected by management judgement and estimation, application of new accounting standards, changes of accounting policy, changes to operations or areas which have been found to contain material errors in the past.

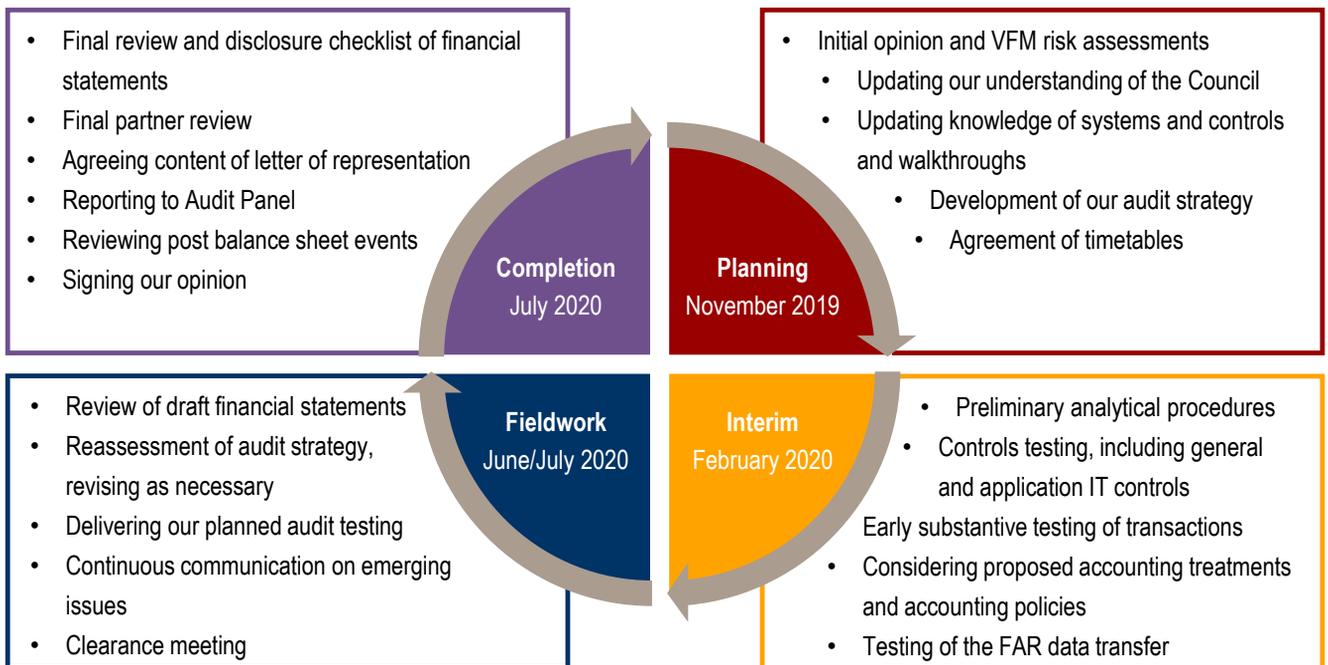
Audit approach

Our audit approach is a risk-based approach primarily driven by the risks we consider to result in a higher risk of material misstatement of the financial statements. Once we have completed our risk assessment, we develop our audit strategy and design audit procedures in response to this assessment.

If we conclude that appropriately-designed controls are in place then we may plan to test and rely upon these controls. If we decide controls are not appropriately designed, or we decide it would be more efficient to do so, we may take a wholly substantive approach to our audit testing. Substantive procedures are audit procedures designed to detect material misstatements at the assertion level and comprise tests of details (of classes of transactions, account balances, and disclosures) and substantive analytical procedures. Irrespective of the assessed risks of material misstatement, which take into account our evaluation of the operating effectiveness of controls, we are required to design and perform substantive procedures for each material class of transactions, account balance, and disclosure.

Our audit will be planned and performed so as to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement and give a true and fair view. The concept of materiality and how we define a misstatement is explained in more detail in section 4.

The diagram below outlines the procedures we perform at the different stages of the audit.



3. AUDIT SCOPE, APPROACH AND TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

Reliance on internal audit

Where possible we will seek to utilise the work performed by internal audit to modify the nature, extent and timing of our audit procedures. We will meet with internal audit to discuss the progress and findings of their work prior to the commencement of our controls evaluation procedures.

Management's and our experts

Management makes use of experts in specific areas when preparing the Council's financial statements. We also use experts to assist us to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence on specific items of account.

Items of account	Management's expert	Our expert
Defined benefit liability	Hyman Robertson Actuaries	PwC, consulting actuary, on behalf of the National Audit Office.
Property, plant and equipment valuation (Land and buildings) and investment properties	Sanderson Weatherall	We will use available third party information to challenge the key valuation assumptions.
Financial instrument disclosures	Link Asset Services	We will review Link Asset Services' methodology to gain assurance that the fair value disclosures of the Council's financial statements assets and liabilities are materially correct.
Long term investment – Shares in Manchester Airport	BDO	Mazars' Financial Reporting Valuations Team.

International Auditing Standards (UK) define service organisations as third party organisations that provide services to the Council that are part of its information systems relevant to financial reporting. We are required to obtain an understanding of the services provided by service organisations as well as evaluating the design and implementation of controls over those services. We have not identified any service organisations that are relevant to our audit.

4. MATERIALITY AND MISSTATEMENTS

Summary of initial materiality thresholds

Threshold	Initial threshold (£'000s)
Overall materiality	£10,967
Performance materiality	£7,677
Trivial threshold for errors to be reported to the Audit Panel	£329

Materiality

Materiality is an expression of the relative significance or importance of a particular matter in the context of financial statements as a whole. Misstatements in financial statements are considered to be material if they, individually or in aggregate, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

Judgements on materiality are made in light of surrounding circumstances and are affected by the size and nature of a misstatement, or a combination of both. Judgements about materiality are based on consideration of the common financial information needs of users as a group and not on specific individual users.

The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and is affected by our perception of the financial information needs of the users of the financial statements. In making our assessment we assume that users:

- have a reasonable knowledge of business, economic activities and accounts;
- have a willingness to study the information in the financial statements with reasonable diligence;
- understand that financial statements are prepared, presented and audited to levels of materiality;
- recognise the uncertainties inherent in the measurement of amounts based on the use of estimates, judgement and the consideration of future events; and
- will make reasonable economic decisions on the basis of the information in the financial statements.

We consider materiality whilst planning and performing our audit based on quantitative and qualitative factors.

Whilst planning, we make judgements about the size of misstatements which we consider to be material and which provides a basis for determining the nature, timing and extent of risk assessment procedures, identifying and assessing the risk of material misstatement and determining the nature, timing and extent of further audit procedures.

The materiality determined at the planning stage does not necessarily establish an amount below which uncorrected misstatements, either individually or in aggregate, will be considered as immaterial.

We revise materiality for the financial statements as our audit progresses should we become aware of information that would have caused us to determine a different amount had we been aware of that information at the planning stage.

Our provisional materiality is set based on a benchmark of 2018/19 gross expenditure at the net cost of services level. We will identify a figure for materiality but identify separate levels for procedures designed to detect individual errors, and also a level above which all identified errors will be reported to the Audit Panel.

We consider that gross expenditure at the net cost of services level remains the key focus of users of the financial statements and, as such, we base our materiality levels around this benchmark.

We expect to set a materiality threshold at 2% of the benchmark on the 2018/19 audited financial statements.



4. MATERIALITY AND MISSTATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

Based on 2018/19 audited financial statements we anticipate the overall materiality for the year ending 31st March 2020 to be in the region of £10.967m (£10.917m in the prior year).

After setting initial materiality, we continue to monitor materiality throughout the audit to ensure that it is set at an appropriate level.

Performance Materiality

Performance materiality is the amount or amounts set by the auditor at less than materiality for the financial statements as a whole to reduce, to an appropriately low level, the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the financial statements as a whole.

We have also calculated materiality for specific classes of transactions, balances or disclosures where we determine that misstatements of a lesser amount than materiality for the financial statements as a whole, could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements. We have set specific materiality for the following items of account:

Item of account	Specific materiality (£'000s)
Officer Remuneration bandings	£5

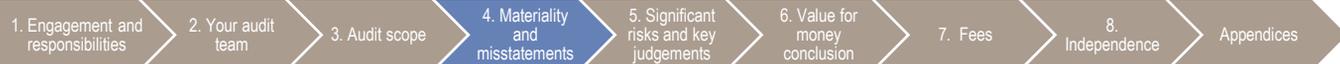
Misstatements

We aggregate misstatements identified during the audit that are other than clearly trivial. We set a level of triviality for individual errors identified (a reporting threshold) for reporting to the Audit Panel that is consistent with the level of triviality that we consider would not need to be accumulated because we expect that the accumulation of such amounts would not have a material effect on the financial statements. Based on our preliminary assessment of overall materiality, our proposed triviality threshold is £329k based on 3% of overall materiality. If you have any queries about this please do not hesitate to raise these with Karen Murray.

Reporting to the Audit Panel

To comply with International Standards on Auditing (UK), the following three types of audit differences will be presented to the Audit Panel:

- summary of adjusted audit differences;
- summary of unadjusted audit differences; and
- summary of disclosure differences (adjusted and unadjusted).



5. SIGNIFICANT RISKS AND KEY JUDGEMENT AREAS

Following the risk assessment approach discussed in section 3 of this document, we have identified relevant risks to the audit of financial statements. The risks that we identify are categorised as significant, enhanced or standard, as defined below:

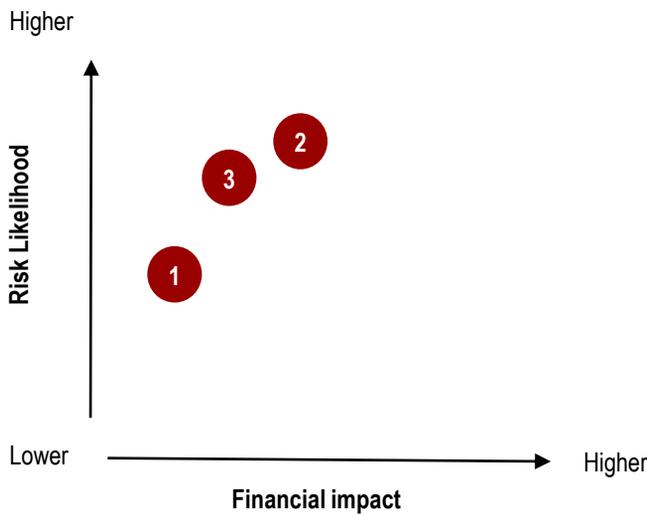
Significant risk A significant risk is an identified and assessed risk of material misstatement that, in the auditor’s judgment, requires special audit consideration. For any significant risk, the auditor shall obtain an understanding of the entity’s controls, including control activities relevant to that risk.

Enhanced risk An enhanced risk is an area of higher assessed risk of material misstatement at audit assertion level other than a significant risk. Enhanced risks incorporate but may not be limited to:

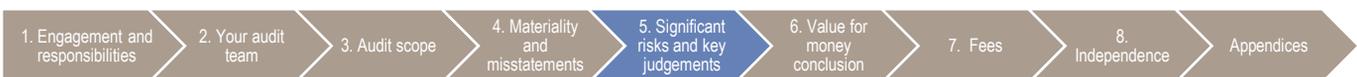
- key areas of management judgement, including accounting estimates which are material but are not considered to give rise to a significant risk of material misstatement; and
- other audit assertion risks arising from significant events or transactions that occurred during the period.

Standard risk This is related to relatively routine, non-complex transactions that tend to be subject to systematic processing and require little management judgement. Although it is considered that there is a risk of material misstatement, there are no elevated or special factors related to the nature, the likely magnitude of the potential misstatements or the likelihood of the risk occurring.

The summary risk assessment, illustrated in the table below, highlights those risks which we deem to be significant. We have summarised our audit response to these risks on the next page.



Significant Risk	
1	Management override of control
2	Property, plant and equipment valuation
3	Defined benefit liability valuation



5. SIGNIFICANT RISKS AND KEY JUDGEMENT AREAS (CONTINUED)

We provide more detail on the identified risks and our testing approach with respect to significant risks in the table below. An audit is a dynamic process; should we change our view of risk or approach to address the identified risks during the course of our audit, we will report this to the Audit Panel.

Significant risks

	Description of risk	Planned response
1	<p>Management override of controls</p> <p>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. Because of the unpredictable way in which such override could occur there is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud on all audits.</p>	<p>We plan to address the management override of controls risk through performing audit work over accounting estimates, journal entries and significant transactions outside the normal course of business or otherwise unusual.</p>
2	<p>Property, plant and equipment valuation (Land & buildings and investment properties)</p> <p>The CIPFA Code requires that where assets are subject to revaluation, their year end carrying value should reflect the appropriate fair value at that date. The Council has adopted a rolling revaluation model which sees all land and buildings revalued over a five year cycle.</p> <p>The valuation of Property, Plant & Equipment involves the use of a management expert (the valuer), and incorporates assumptions and estimates which impact materially on the reported value. There are risks relating to the valuation process which reflect the significant impact of the valuation judgements and assumptions and the degree of estimation uncertainty.</p> <p>In addition, as a result of the rolling programme of revaluations, there is a risk that individual assets which have not been revalued for up to four years are not valued at their materially correct fair value.</p>	<p>The Council have appointed Sanderson Wetherall as valuation expert who will be instructed to revalue the land, buildings and investment property portfolio as at 31 January 2020. This will include all assets over £1m, assets below this threshold which are due for revaluation on the five year cycle, investment properties and surplus assets.</p> <p>In relation to the assets which are revalued during 2019/20 we will: assess the Council's valuer's qualifications, objectivity and independence to carry out such valuations, and review the valuation methodology used, including testing the underlying data and assumptions.</p> <p>For assets below the £1m threshold which aren't revalued, we will review and challenge managements assessment of their valuation to ensure there is no material misstatement.</p> <p>In addition, we will consider movement in market indices between 31 January 2020 and the balance sheet date in order to determine whether these indicate that fair values have moved materially over that time.</p>



5. SIGNIFICANT RISKS AND KEY JUDGEMENT AREAS (CONTINUED)

Significant risks continued

	Area of management judgement / enhanced risk	Planned response
3	<p>Defined benefit liability valuation</p> <p>The net pension liability represents a material element of the Council's balance sheet. The Council is an admitted body of Greater Manchester Pension Fund, which had its last triennial valuation completed as at 31 March 2019.</p> <p>The valuation of the Local Government Pension Scheme relies on a number of assumptions, most notably around the actuarial assumptions, and actuarial methodology which results in the Council's overall valuation.</p> <p>There are financial assumptions and demographic assumptions used in the calculation of the Council's valuation, such as the discount rate, inflation rates and mortality rates. The assumptions should also reflect the profile of the Council's employees, and should be based on appropriate data. The basis of the assumptions is derived on a consistent basis year to year, or updated to reflect any changes.</p> <p>There is a risk that the assumptions and methodology used in valuing the Council's pension obligation are not reasonable or appropriate to the Council's circumstances. This could have a material impact to the net pension liability in 2019/20.</p>	<p>As part of our work we will review the controls that the Council has in place over the information sent to the Scheme Actuary, including the Council's process and controls with respect to the assumptions used in the valuation. We will also evaluate the competency, objectivity and independence of the scheme Actuary, Hymans Robertson.</p> <p>We will review the appropriateness of the methodology applied, and the key assumptions included within the valuation, compare them to expected ranges, utilising the information provided by PwC, consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office. We will review the methodology applied in the valuation of the liability by Hymans Robertson.</p>

Revenue recognition

International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 240 includes a rebuttable presumption that the fraud risk from revenue recognition is a significant audit risk.

However, we recognise the nature of revenue in local government differs significantly to the sources of income in the private sector. We also consider that there are limited incentives and opportunities to manipulate the way income is recognised in local government.

Based on our understanding of the Council's revenue streams, we have rebutted the presumption that revenue recognition is a significant risk at the Council. Our testing of revenue is focused on our standard procedures and does not incorporate specific work on the risk of fraud in recognising revenue. We will however keep the revenue recognition rebuttal under review and update Members of the Audit Panel through our Audit Progress Report should a change in approach be required.

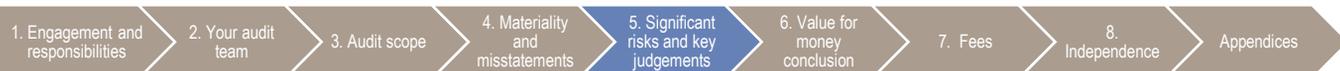


5. SIGNIFICANT RISKS AND KEY JUDGEMENT AREAS (CONTINUED)

Key areas of management judgement and enhanced risks

Key areas of management judgement include accounting estimates which are material but are not considered to give rise to a significant risk of material misstatement. These areas of management judgement represent other areas of audit emphasis, and include the management judgement areas the Council discloses in its financial statements

	Area of management judgement and enhanced risk	Planned response
1	<p>Valuation of shareholding in Manchester Airport</p> <p>The valuation of the Council's shareholding in the Airport involves judgement as it is not publicly traded</p>	We will review the work of BDO as management's expert used to value the shares held in the Airport and ensure the valuation is properly recorded in the accounts.
2	<p>Completeness and Accuracy of Property, plant and equipment (PPE) - Transition to new Fixed Asset Register</p> <p>In the current year a new fixed asset register has been implemented and thereby all data for the entirety of the PPE portfolio has been reviewed by management and transitioned to the new register within the year.</p>	We will perform audit procedures to gain assurance over the completeness and accuracy of the transition of data to the new fixed asset register.
3.	<p>Schools</p> <p>Management judge whether schools fall inside or outside their control when determining which are included in the Council's financial statements.</p>	We will review management's assessment of who controls the schools within the borough for the purposes of inclusion within the Council's financial statements.



6. VALUE FOR MONEY

Our approach to Value for Money

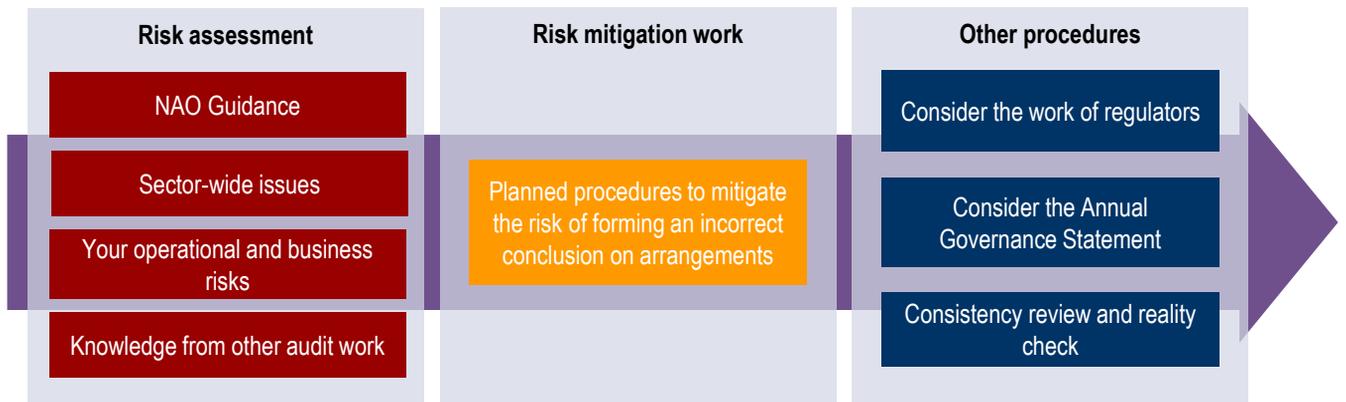
We are required to form a conclusion as to whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out, and sets out the overall criterion and sub-criteria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

A summary of the work we undertake to reach our conclusion is provided below:



Significant audit risks

The NAO's guidance requires us to carry out work at the planning stage to identify whether or not a value for money (VFM) audit risk exists. Risk, in the context of our 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 outlined above, we draw on our deep understanding of the Council and its partners, the local and national economy and wider knowledge of the public sector.

For the 2019/20 financial year, we have set out overleaf a significant risk to our VFM conclusion. In addition we have still to complete our consideration of other possible risk areas. When we have completed our VFM planning considerations we will report any additional significant risks to the Audit Panel.



6. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION (CONTINUED)

Significant Value for Money risks (continued)

Description of significant risk	Planned response
<p>Financial sustainability</p> <p>The Council's medium term financial strategy for the period 2019/20 to 2023/24 sets out the financial challenges it faces. A balanced budget is proposed for 2019/20 (net budget requirement of £196.8m) after using £9.3m of reserves to fund additional Children's Services pressures, and a savings target of £4m. The budget gap for the remainder of the medium term strategy is significant with a cumulative deficit of £31m by 31 March 2024.</p> <p>The continuing challenges the Council faces are not new and are not unique to Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. The challenges do, however, present a significant audit risk in respect of considering the arrangements that the Council has in place to deliver financial sustainability over the medium term.</p>	<p>We will review the arrangements the Council has in place for ensuring financial resilience, specifically that the medium term financial plan has taken into consideration factors such as future funding sources and levels, levels of other income, salary and general inflation, demand pressures, restructuring costs and sensitivity analysis given the degree of variability in the above factors. We will also review the arrangements in place to monitor progress delivering the 2019/20 budget and related savings plans, and how the Council proposes to address the cumulative deficit to 31 March 2024.</p>



7. FEES FOR AUDIT AND OTHER SERVICES

Fees for work as the Council's appointed auditor

At this stage of the audit we anticipate that additional audit fee will be incurred in respect of the Council implementing a new fixed asset register and engaging a new valuer during quarter 4 of 2019/20. The additional fee will address the substantive testing of data migration and understanding any adjustments to the brought forward valuations at 1 April 2019. We anticipate an additional fee of £4,500 and will advise the Audit Panel should this amount change.

Service	2018/19 fee	2019/20 fee
Code audit work	£87,463**	£85,363*

*Comprises audit scale fee £80,863 set by PSAA as communicated in our fee letter of 23 April 2019, plus the additional fee of £4,500 referred to above.

** Comprises audit scale fee of £80,863 plus £6,000 regarding additional VFM conclusion work and £600 regarding the impact of McCloud and GMP on the pension fund liability.

Fees for non-PSAA work

We have not been engaged by the Council to carry out any additional work over and above the audit of the Council's statutory audit.

Should we be engaged to undertake any additional work we will consider whether there are any actual, potential or perceived threats to our independence. Further information about our responsibilities in relation to independence is provided in section 8.

Services provided to other entities within the Council's group

We have not been engaged by any of the Council's group entities to provide any audit, or non-audit, services in 2019/20.

8. OUR COMMITMENT TO INDEPENDENCE

We are committed to independence and are required by the Financial Reporting Council to confirm to you at least annually, in writing, that we comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard. In addition, we communicate any matters or relationship which we believe may have a bearing on our independence or the objectivity of the audit team.

Based on the information provided by you and our own internal procedures to safeguard our independence as auditors, we confirm that in our professional judgement there are no relationships between us and any of our related or subsidiary entities, and you and your related entities creating any unacceptable threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We have policies and procedures in place which are designed to ensure that we carry out our work with integrity, objectivity and independence. These policies include:

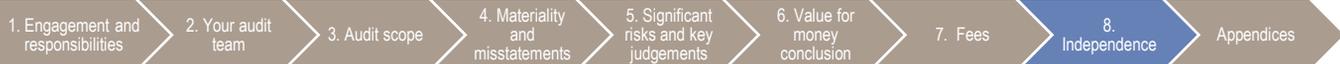
- all partners and staff are required to complete an annual independence declaration;
- all new partners and staff are required to complete an independence confirmation and also complete computer-based ethics training;
- rotation policies covering audit engagement partners and other key members of the audit team;
- use by managers and partners of our client and engagement acceptance system which requires all non-audit services to be approved in advance by the audit engagement partner.

We confirm, as at the date of this document, that the engagement team and others in the firm as appropriate, and Mazars LLP are independent and comply with relevant ethical requirements. However, if at any time you have concerns or questions about our integrity, objectivity or independence please discuss these with Karen Murray in the first instance.

Prior to the provision of any non-audit services Karen Murray will undertake appropriate procedures to consider and fully assess the impact that providing the service may have on our auditor independence. Included in this assessment is consideration of Auditor Guidance Note 01 as issued by the NAO, and the PSAA Terms of Appointment.

As we have not been engaged to carry out any non-audit work to date, no threats to our independence have been identified. Any emerging independence threats and associated identified safeguards will be communicated in our Audit Completion Report.

Any emerging independence threats and associated identified safeguards will be communicated in our Audit Completion Report.



APPENDIX A – KEY COMMUNICATION POINTS

ISA (UK) 260 'Communication with Those Charged with Governance', ISA (UK) 265 'Communicating Deficiencies In Internal Control To Those Charged With Governance And Management' and other ISAs (UK) specifically require us to communicate the following:

Required communication	Audit Strategy Memorandum	Audit Completion Report
Our responsibilities in relation to the audit of the financial statements and our wider responsibilities	✓	
Planned scope and timing of the audit	✓	
Significant audit risks and areas of management judgement	✓	
Our commitment to independence	✓	✓
Responsibilities for preventing and detecting errors	✓	
Materiality and misstatements	✓	✓
Fees for audit and other services	✓	
Significant deficiencies in internal control		✓
Significant findings from the audit		✓
Significant matters discussed with management		✓
Our conclusions on the significant audit risks and areas of management judgement		✓
Summary of misstatements		✓
Management representation letter		✓
Our proposed draft audit report		✓

APPENDIX B – FORTHCOMING ACCOUNTING AND OTHER ISSUES

Financial reporting changes relevant to 2019/20

There are no significant changes in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting for the 2019/20 financial year.

Financial reporting changes in future years

Accounting standard	Year of application	Commentary
IFRS 16 – Leases	2020/21	<p>The CIPFA/LASAAC Code Board has determined that the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting will adopt the principles of IFRS 16 Leases, for the first time from 2020/21.</p> <p>IFRS 16 will replace the existing leasing standard, IAS 17, and will introduce significant changes to the way bodies account for leases, which will have substantial implications for the majority of public sector bodies.</p> <p>The most significant changes will be in respect of lessee accounting (i.e. where a body leases property or equipment from another entity). The existing distinction between operating and finance leases will be removed and instead, the new standard will require a right of use asset and an associated lease liability to be recognised on the lessee's Balance Sheet.</p> <p>In order to meet the requirements of IFRS 16, all local authorities will need to undertake a significant project that is likely to be time-consuming and potentially complex. There will also be consequential impacts upon capital financing arrangements at many authorities which will need to be identified and addressed at an early stage of the project.</p>