



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales

# 2018 Audit Plan – Powys Pension Fund

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This document was produced by Anthony Veale, Phil Pugh and Melanie Williams

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# 2018 Audit Plan

## Summary

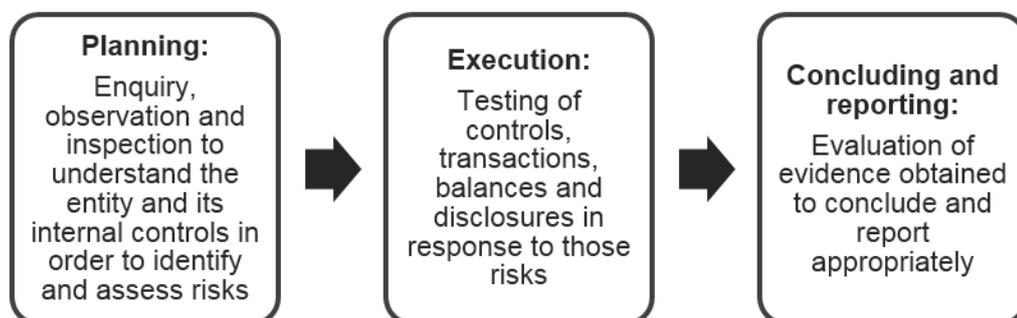
- 1 As your external auditor, my objective is to carry out an audit which discharges my statutory duties as Auditor General and fulfils my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice to examine and certify whether Powys Pension Fund (the Pension Fund) accounting statements are 'true and fair'.
- 2 The purpose of this plan is to set out my proposed work, when it will be undertaken, how much it will cost and who will undertake it.
- 3 There have been no limitations imposed on me in planning the scope of this audit.
- 4 My responsibilities, along with those of management and those charged with governance, are set out in [Appendix 1](#).

## Audit of Pension Fund accounts

- 5 It is my responsibility to issue a report on the accounting statements which includes an opinion on their 'truth and fairness'. This provides assurance that the accounts:
  - are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error;
  - comply with statutory and other applicable requirements; and
  - comply with all relevant requirements for accounting presentation and disclosure.

[Appendix 1](#) sets out my responsibilities in full.
- 6 The audit work I undertake to fulfil my responsibilities responds to my assessment of risks. This understanding allows us to develop an audit approach which focuses on addressing specific risks whilst providing assurance for the Pension Fund accounts as a whole. My audit approach consists of three phases as set out in [Exhibit 1](#).

### Exhibit 1: my audit approach



- 7 The key risks of material misstatement which I consider require specific audit consideration, are set out in **Exhibit 2** along with the work I intend to undertake to address them.

**Exhibit 2: financial audit risks**

<b>Financial audit risk</b>	<b>Proposed audit response</b>
<p>The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk [ISA 240.31-33].</p>	<p>My audit team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• test the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements;</li> <li>• review accounting estimates for biases; and</li> <li>• evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Investment Management</b></p> <p>The systems and records of the investment managers generate account entries made to the Pension Fund Account and Net Assets Statement. The investment managers provide internal control reports on the investments held on behalf of the Pension Fund. These are independently audited and provide the Pension Fund with assurance on a wide range of controls, eg valuation of the investment portfolio held.</p> <p>There is a risk that the internal control reports will not be available, or not provide sufficient assurance for audit purposes.</p>	<p>My audit team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess the investment managers as a service organisation;</li> <li>• check that investments have been made in accordance with the Statement of Investment Principles;</li> <li>• obtain direct confirmation from the investment managers and custodian of year end investment balances and holdings; and</li> <li>• assess whether the investment managers internal control reports provide assurance over the relevant controls, including the valuation of investments held.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Private Equity Investments</b></p> <p>Year-end valuation of private equity investments are provided by investment managers which are based on forward looking estimates and judgements. As there is no quoted market price, there is a greater risk to the reasonableness of the estimated year end value of these investments.</p>	<p>My audit team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirm the investment valuations to audited financial statements; and</li> <li>• seek additional assurance over the valuation basis from controls assurance reports where available.</li> </ul>

Financial audit risk	Proposed audit response
<p><b>Revised Accounts and Audit Regulations</b>            Welsh Government have issued revised Accounts and Audit Regulations for Wales. This revised legislation will apply to the   2017-18 financial year.            One of the key changes included in this legislation is that Pension Fund financial statements no longer have to be incorporated into the administering authority financial statements and can be produced as a stand-alone document.</p>	<p>My audit team will discuss with the Authority its intended actions in response to the revised Accounts and Audit Regulations and ensure that requirements of the regulations are complied with.</p>
<p><b>All Wales Pension Partnership</b>            The eight Pension Funds in Wales have created an 'all-Wales' pooled investment vehicle which will be overseen and reported on by a joint governance committee. An inter-authority agreement has been signed by the Welsh Pension Funds and the joint committee will be producing financial statements for the 2017-18 financial year. However no investments will be transferred to this new management arrangement until after 1 April 2018.            Separate financial statements will need to be prepared for the joint committee which for 2017-18 are only expected to include administration costs of setting up the joint committee. However, individual Pension Funds will need to consider recognising a share of the 2017-18 joint committee financial statements in their financial statements.</p>	<p>My audit team will review progress on this arrangement and consider if there is an impact on the 2017-18 financial statements and what additional disclosures are required.</p>
<p><b>Change to contribution rates</b>            The Pension Fund was subject to a full actuarial valuation as at 31 March 2016. The new contribution rates come into effect on 1 April 2017. There is a risk that these new contribution rates are not fairly reflected in the Pension Fund's financial statements.</p>	<p>My audit team will check that the revised contribution rates have been correctly calculated in the 2017-18 financial statements.</p>

- 8 I do not seek to obtain absolute assurance that the Pension Fund accounting statements are true and fair, but adopt a concept of materiality. My aim is to identify material misstatements, that is, those that might result in a reader of the accounts being misled. The levels at which I judge such misstatements to be material will be reported to the Audit Committee, as the administering authority of the Pension Fund as a whole, prior to completion of the audit.

- 9 For reporting purposes, I will treat any misstatements below a trivial level (set at 5% of materiality) as not requiring consideration by those charged with governance and therefore I will not report them.
- 10 My fees are based on the following assumptions:
- the draft financial statements have been subject to a robust quality assurance review by officers;
  - year-on-year movements in respect of balances, transactions and disclosure notes within the draft financial statements are supported by appropriate explanations;
  - working papers and other information provided to support the financial statements is timely, to the quality expected and has been subject to quality assurance review;
  - appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided to enable my audit team to deliver the audit in an efficient manner;
  - all appropriate officials will be available during the audit;
  - you have all the necessary controls and checks in place to enable the Responsible Financial Officer to provide all the assurances that I require in the Letter of Representation addressed to me; and
  - Internal Audit's planned programme of work is complete and management has responded to issues that may have affected the financial statements.

## Statutory audit functions

- 11 In addition to the audit of the accounts, I have statutory responsibilities to receive questions and objections to the accounts from local electors. These responsibilities are set out in the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004:
- Section 30 Inspection of documents and questions at audit; and
  - Section 31 Right to make objections at audit.
- 12 Audit fees will be chargeable for work undertaken in dealing with electors' questions and objections. Because audit work will depend upon the number and nature of any questions and objections, it is not possible to estimate an audit fee for this work.
- 13 If I do receive questions or objections, I will discuss potential audit fees at the time.

## Pension Fund annual report

- 14 Administering authorities are required to publish a pension fund annual report which must include the pension fund accounts.
- 15 I am required to read the Pension Fund annual report and consider whether the information it contains is consistent with the audited Pension Fund accounts included in the Council's main accounting statements.

16 I also issue an audit statement confirming the consistency of the accounts included in the annual report with the audited Pension Fund accounts.

## Fee, audit team and timetable

### Fee

- 17 Your estimated fee for 2018 is set out in [Exhibit 3](#). This figure is consistent with the fee set out in the 2017 audit plan.
- 18 As per our approved Fee Scheme for 2018-19, a small increase has been applied to my fee rates (less than 1%) which we have looked to offset by a reduction in the time taken to complete the audit.

#### Exhibit 3: audit fee

Audit area	Proposed fee for 2018 (£)	Actual fee for 2017 (£)
Audit of Pension Fund accounts <sup>1</sup>	34,599	34,599

<sup>1</sup> The fees shown in this document are exclusive of VAT, which is no longer charged to you.

- 19 Planning will be ongoing, and changes to my programme of audit work and therefore my fee, may be required if any key new risks emerge. I shall make no changes without first discussing them with the Director of Finance.
- 20 Further information on my [fee scales and fee setting](#) can be found on the Wales Audit Office website.

### Audit team

- 21 The main members of my team, together with their contact details, are summarised in [Exhibit 4](#).

#### Exhibit 4: my team

Name	Role	Contact number	E-mail address
Anthony Veale	Engagement Lead – Financial Audit	02920 320585	anthony.veale@audit.wales
Phil Pugh	Financial Audit Manager	02920 320645	phil.pugh@audit.wales
Melanie Williams	Financial Audit Team Leader	02921 051815	melanie.williams@audit.wales

22 There is one potential conflict of interest that I wish to bring to your attention. This relates to a member of my financial audit team who holds a voluntary role as Treasurer of a charity which is an admitted body within the Pension Fund. I have introduced appropriate arrangements to ensure that this officer does not undertake any audit work in respect of contributions received from or benefits payable to any member of this charity. I can confirm that, with the exception of the above, all other members of my team are independent of the Council and your officers.

## Timetable

23 I will provide reports, or other outputs as agreed, to the Audit Committee and Pension and Investment Committee, covering the areas of work identified in this document. My key milestones are set out in [Exhibit 5](#).

### Exhibit 5: timetable

Planned output	Work undertaken	Report finalised
<b>2018 Audit Plan</b>	January 2018 to April 2018	April 2018
<b>Financial accounts work:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit of Financial Statements Report</li> <li>• Opinion on Financial Statements</li> </ul>	February to September 2018	September 2018  September 2018

## Future developments

### Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

24 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) became law in April 2015. The Act requires me to report every five years to the National Assembly on how public bodies apply the sustainability principles. During 2016 I consulted on my options for reshaping public audit in Wales and this year have been working collaboratively with a small number of public bodies to develop an audit approach which is rigorous, meaningful and proportionate. I have also undertaken my first audit work relating to the Act, the Year One Commentary. I will publish a report on my findings in Spring 2018 and will share those findings at a national stakeholder event in May 2018.

## Other

- 25 Details of other future developments including changes to key International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and of the Wales Audit Office's Good Practice Exchange (GPX) seminars are set out in [Appendix 2](#).
- 26 The Wales Audit Office's GPX programme seeks to support the improvement of public services across Wales by identifying and sharing good practice. The GPX seminars bring a range of public sector bodies together to share their practical experiences and learning in areas we consider would benefit from sharing good practice. The seminars are provided free of charge to delegates.

# Appendix 1

## Respective responsibilities

The Council is the administering authority of the Pension Fund. This Audit Plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of auditing standards and proper audit practices. It provides the Council with an outline of the financial audit work required for the Pension Fund accounts.

As amended by the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013, the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 sets out my powers and duties to undertake your financial audit. It is my responsibility to issue a certificate and report on the Pension Fund accounting statements which includes an opinion on their 'truth and fairness', providing assurance that they:

- are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error;
- comply with the statutory and other applicable requirements; and
- comply with all relevant requirements for accounting presentation and disclosure.

My audit work does not relieve management and those charged with governance of their responsibilities which include:

- the preparation of the financial statements and Annual Report in accordance with applicable accounting standards and guidance;
- the keeping of proper accounting records;
- ensuring the regularity of financial transactions; and
- securing value for money in the use of resources.

Management agrees to provide me with:

- access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- additional information that I may request from management for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to persons within the authority from whom I determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

Management will need to provide me with written representations to confirm:

- that it has fulfilled its responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements;
- that all transactions have been recorded and are reflected in the financial statements;
- the completeness of the information provided to me for the purposes of the audit; and
- to support other audit evidence relevant to the financial statements or specific assertions in the financial statements if I deem it necessary or if required by ISAs.

# Appendix 2

## Other future developments

### Forthcoming IFRS changes

Exhibit 6: forthcoming IFRS changes

Standard	Effective date	Further details
IFRS 9 financial instruments	2018-19	IFRS 9 financial instruments will replace IAS 39 and includes a new principles-based approach for the classification and measurement of financial assets. It also introduces a new impairment methodology for financial assets based on expected losses rather than incurred losses. This will result in earlier and more timely recognition of expected credit losses. The accounting requirements for financial liabilities are almost all carried forward unchanged from IAS 39.
IFRS 15 revenue from contracts with customers	2018-19	IFRS 15 revenue from contracts with customers introduces a principles-based five-step model for recognising revenue arising from contracts with customers. It is based on a core principle requiring revenue recognition to depict the transfer of promised goods or services to the customer in an amount that reflects the consideration the body expects to be entitled to, in exchange for those goods or services. It will also require more extensive disclosures than are currently required.
IFRS 16 leases	2019-20	IFRS 16 will replace the current leases standard IAS 17. The key change is that it largely removes the distinction between operating and finance leases for lessees by introducing a single lessee accounting model that requires a lessee to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying asset is of low value. It will lead to all leases being recognised on the balance sheet as an asset based on a right of use principle with a corresponding liability for future rentals. This is a significant change in lessee accounting.

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The GDPR is a new data protection law for the whole of the EU applicable from 25 May 2018, which has the intention of harmonising and updating data protection laws. The UK Government has introduced the Data Protection Bill which will incorporate the GDPR into UK law and replace the 1998 Data Protection Act, and which it intends will also come into force on 25 May 2018.

The GDPR introduces new requirements for personal data processing, including an accountability principle which will require more detailed records of the processing of personal data, evidence of compliance with the data protection principles and the technical and organisational security measures taken to protect the data. We are updating our own policies, processes and documentation with a view to meeting these requirements and expect that the bodies we audit will be taking similar steps. Key areas of additional work include the use of more detailed fair processing notices, more privacy impact assessments and more extensive record keeping in relation to processing activities.

## Good Practice Exchange

The Wales Audit Office's Good Practice Exchange (GPX) helps public services improve by sharing knowledge and practices that work. Events are held where knowledge can be exchanged face to face and resources shared online.

The focus of GPX events include financial management, public sector staff and governance. Further information, including details of forthcoming GPX events and outputs from past seminars, can be found on the [GPX section of the Wales Audit Office website](#).

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