External Audit Report 2015/16

Ryedale District Council

September 2016

Contents

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This report is addressed to 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 Rashpal Khangura, 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.

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Section one: Introduction

Introduction

This document summarises:

- **The key issues identified during our audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 for the Authority; and**
- **Our assessment of the Authority's arrangements to secure value for money.**

Scope of this report

This report summarises the key findings arising from:

- Our audit work at Ryedale District Council ('the Authority') in relation to the Authority's 2015/16 financial statements; and
- The work to support our 2015/16 conclusion on the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources ('VFM conclusion').

Financial statements

Our *External Audit Plan 2015/16*, presented to you in March 2016, set out the four stages of our financial statements audit process.

Planning → Control Evaluation → Substantive Procedures → Completion

This report focuses on the third stage of the process: substantive procedures. Our on site work for this took place during July 2016.

We are now in the final phase of the audit, the completion stage. Some aspects of this stage are also discharged through this report.

VFM Conclusion

Our External Audit Plan 2015/16 explained our risk-based approach to VFM work. We have now completed the work to support our 2015/16 VFM conclusion. This included:

- assessing the potential VFM risks and identifying the residual audit risks for our VFM conclusion; and
- Carrying out additional risk-based work.

Structure of this report

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 summarises the headline messages.
- Section 3 sets out our key findings from our audit work in relation to the 2015/16 financial statements of the Authority .
- Section 4 outlines our key findings from our work on the VFM conclusion.

We made one recommendation included in Appendix One.

Acknowledgements

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

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Section two: Headlines

Headlines

This table summarises the headline messages for the Authority. Sections three and four of this report provide further details on each area.

This table summarises the headline messages. Sections three and four of this report provide further details on each area.

Proposed audit opinion	We anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's financial statements by 30 September 2016. We will also report that your Annual Governance Statement complies with guidance issued by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007.
Audit adjustments	Our audit identified one audit adjustment of a movement of balances between short and long term creditors with a total value of £1.398million. The impact of this adjustment is to: — Decrease the balance on Short Term Creditors as at 31 March 2016 by £1.398million; and — Increase the balance on Long Term Creditors as at 31 March 2016 by for the year by £1.398 million. It should be noted that the movement in balances above has no impact on the financial position of the Authority. This was adjusted by management and further details are shown in Appendix two.
Key financial statements audit risks	We review risks to the financial statements on an ongoing basis. We identified no significant risks specific to the Authority during 2015/16 with respect to the financial statements.
Accounts production and audit process	We received complete draft accounts by 30 June 2016 in accordance with the DCLG deadline. The accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures are in line with the requirements of the Code. The Authority has implemented all of the recommendations in the ISA 260 Report 2014/15 report issued by the Authority's previous external auditors relating to the financial statements. The Authority has good processes in place for the production of the accounts and overall good quality supporting working papers. Officers dealt efficiently with audit queries and the audit process has been completed within the planned timescales. We will debrief with the finance team to share views on the final accounts audit. Hopefully this will lead to further efficiencies in the 2016/17 audit process. In particular we would like to thank Authority Officers who were available throughout the audit visit to answer our queries.

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Headlines (cont.)

This table summarises the headline messages for the Authority. Sections three and four of this report provide further details on each area.

This table summarises the headline messages. The remainder of this report provides further details on each area.

VFM conclusion and risk areas	We identified one VFM risk in our External audit plan 2015/16 issued in March 2016 relating to the High Court Judgement quashing the permission granted by The Ryedale District Planning Committee relating to Wentworth Street Car park. In his Judgement Mr Justice Dove view was that officers misled the Planning Committee meeting on 24 April 2014 when the decision was taken. We reviewed the decision-making arrangements at the Authority to determine whether expert advice received by officers was fairly reflected in the key decision making reports considered by members relating to Wentworth Street Car Park. We have worked with officers throughout the year to discuss the VFM risk and our detailed findings are reported in section 4 of this report. There are no matters of any significance arising as result of our audit work in these VFM risk areas. 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 VFM conclusion by 30 September 2016.
Completion	At the date of this report our audit of the financial statements is largely complete. You are required to provide us with representations on specific matters such as your going concern assertion and whether the transactions in the accounts are legal and unaffected by fraud. We provided a draft of this representation letter to the Section 151 Officer. We draw your attention to the requirement in our representation letter for you to confirm to us that you have disclosed all relevant related parties to us. We confirm that we have complied with requirements on objectivity and independence in relation to this year's audit of the Authority's financial statements.

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Section three: Financial Statements

Proposed opinion and audit differences

Our audit identified one audit adjustment.

The impact of this adjustment is to:

- **Decrease the balance on Short Term Creditors as at 31 March 2016 by £1.4million; and**
- **Increase the balance on Long Term Creditors as at 31 March 2016 by for the year by £1.4 million.**

Proposed audit opinion

We anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion on the Authority's financial statements following approval of the Statement of Accounts by the Policy and Resources Committee on 22 September 2016.

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 two for more information on materiality) level for this year's audit was set at £400,000. Audit differences below £20,000 are not considered significant.

Our audit identified one significant audit differences, which we set out in Appendix two. It is our understanding that these will be adjusted in the final version of the financial statements.

The tables on the right illustrate the total impact of audit differences on the Authority's movements on the Balance Sheet for the year and balance sheet as at 31 March 2016.

The net impact on the General Fund as a result of audit adjustments has a nil effect on the financial position of the authority as at 31 March 2016.

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2016	£000	£000	
£m	**Pre-audit**	**Post-audit**	***Ref (App.3)***
Property, plant and equipment	15,737	15,373	
Other long term assets	2,662	2,662	
Current assets	12,970	12,970	
Current liabilities	(6,862)	(5,464)	*1*
Long term liabilities	(20,558)	(21,956)	*1*
Net worth	**3,949**	**3,949**	
General Fund	0	0	
Other usable reserves	6,194	6,194	
Unusable reserves	(2,245)	(2,245)	
Total reserves	**3,949**	**3,949**	

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Proposed opinion and audit differences (cont.)

The wording of your Annual Governance Statement complies with guidance issued by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007.

In addition, we identified a small number of presentational adjustments required to ensure that the accounts are compliant with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16 ('the Code'). We understand that the Authority will be addressing these where significant.

Annual governance statement

We have reviewed the 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.

We have reviewed the Authority's annual report and can confirm it is not inconsistent with the financial information contained in the audited financial statements.

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Significant audit risks

We have worked with the Authority throughout the year to discuss significant risks and key areas of audit focus.

This section sets out our detailed findings on those risks.

In our *External Audit Plan 2015/16* we reported that we would consider two risk areas that are specifically required by professional standards and report our findings to you. These risk areas were Management override of controls and the Fraud risk of revenue recognition.

The table below sets out the outcome of our audit procedures and assessment on these risk areas.

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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 2015/16 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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Judgements

We always consider the level of prudence within key judgements in your financial statements. We have summarised our view below using the following range of judgement:

Assessment of subjective areas			
Asset/liability class	**15/16**	**Balance (£m)**	**KPMG comment**
Provisions	3	£0.643 million *(PY: £0.556 million)*	The Authority's provisions have increased by £87,000, related to an increase in provision for business rates appeals. We consider the provision disclosures to be proportionate.
Accruals/ Revenue Recognition / Grants	3	£32.006 million *(PY: £31.999 million)*	We consider the related disclosures to be proportionate. The main accruals are consistent with the prior year and in line with our expectations.
Property, Plant and Equipment (valuations / asset lives)	3	£15.737 million *(PY: £15.999 million)*	The small movement in year of £262,000 largely relates to the depreciation charge on the Authority's long term assets. We have reviewed the Authority's policy on depreciation of assets and consider it in line with our expectations.
Pensions	3	£18.359 million *(PY: £20.440 million)*	The formation of the Authority's pension liability balance is impacted by many factors including inflation, discount rate, salary growth and life expectancy. The balance is formulated by the pension fund actuaries, a third party expert. We have assessed the independence of the fund's actuary and agreed that the Authority's liability has been represented in line with Actuary's independent report.

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Accounts production and audit process

The accounts and the supporting working papers were of a good quality.

Officers dealt efficiently with audit queries and the audit process could be completed within the planned timescales.

The Authority has implemented all of the recommendations in the Authority's previous external auditor's ISA 260 Report 2014/15.

Accounts production and audit process

ISA 260 requires us to communicate to you our views about 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.

We considered the following criteria:

Element	Commentary
Accounting practices and financial reporting	The Authority maintains a good financial reporting process and produce statements of accounts to a good standard. We consider that accounting practices are appropriate
Completeness of draft accounts	We received a complete set of draft accounts on 30 June 2016.
Quality of supporting working papers	We issued our Accounts Audit Protocol including our required working papers for the audit on 3 March 2016. The quality of working papers provided was good and in the main met the standards specified in our Accounts Audit Protocol.
Response to audit queries	Officers resolved all audit queries in a timely manner.

Prior year recommendations

As part of our audit we have specifically followed up the Authority's progress in addressing the recommendations made by the Authority's previous external auditors in last years ISA 260 report.

The Authority has implemented all of the recommendations from last year's *ISA 260 Report 2014/15*.

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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 financial statements.

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

Once we have finalised our opinions and conclusions 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 Ryedale District Council for the year ending 31 March 2016, we confirm that there were no relationships between KPMG LLP and Ryedale District Council, 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 four 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 Financial Manager for presentation to the Audit Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 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 judgment, 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.

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Section four: Value for Money

VFM Conclusion

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.

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.

Background

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.'

The VFM approach is fundamentally unchanged from that adopted in 2014/2015 and the process is shown in the diagram below. However, the previous two specified reporting criteria (financial resilience and economy, efficiency and effectiveness) have been replaced with a single criteria supported by three sub-criteria.

These sub-criteria provide a focus to our VFM work at the Authority.

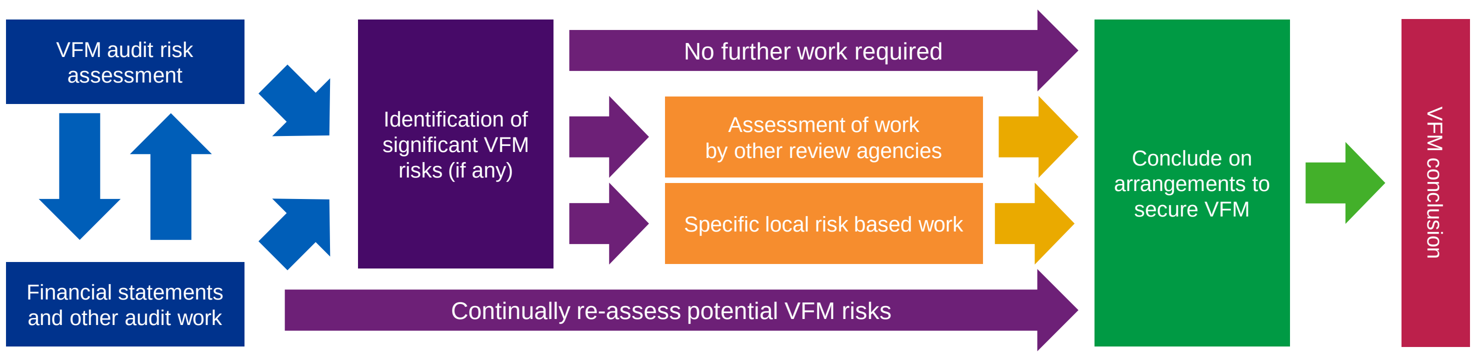
Conclusion

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.

Overall criterion

In all significant respects, the audited body had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

Informed decision making	Sustainable resource deployment	Working with partners and third parties
✓ **Met**	✓ **Met**	✓ **Met**



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Specific VFM Risks

We have identified a number of specific VFM risks.

In all cases we are satisfied that external or internal scrutiny provides sufficient assurance that the Authority's current arrangements in relation to these risk areas are adequate.

Work completed

In line with the risk-based approach set out on the previous page, and in our *External Audit Plan* we have:

— Assessed the Authority's key business risks which are relevant to our VFM conclusion;

— Identified the residual audit risks for our VFM conclusion, taking account of work undertaken in previous years or as part of our financial statements audit; and

— Considered the results of relevant work by the Authority, inspectorates and review agencies in relation to these risk areas.

Key findings

Below we set out the findings in respect of those areas where we have identified a residual audit risk for our VFM conclusion.

We concluded that we needed to carry out additional work for some of these risks. This work is now complete and we also report on this below.

Key VFM risk	Assessment
Wentworth Street Car Park We identified one VFM risk in our External audit plan 2015/16 issued in March 2016 relating to the High Court Judgement quashing the permission granted by The Ryedale District Planning Committee relating to Wentworth Street Car park. In his Judgement Mr Justice Dove view was that officers misled the Planning Committee meeting on 24 April 2014 when the decision was taken. We reviewed the decision-making arrangements at the Authority to determine whether expert advice received by officers was fairly reflected in the key decision making reports considered by members relating to Wentworth Street Car Park. This is relevant to the informed decision making, sub-criteria of the VFM conclusion.	We carried out a detailed review of: • Justice Dove's judgement dated 9th July 2015; • Report by the Planning Committee dated 18 August 2015; • 24th April 2014 report to the Planning Committee and related papers; • Planning inspectors report dated 29 October 2012; • Justice Gilbart's judgement dated 17 December 2014; and • Advice received by the Authority from David Manley QC dated 23 October 2014 and 2 April 2015. We also received copies of various e-mails confirming the advice the Authority followed and this was supported with detailed discussions with key officers. . On the basis of the work conducted above in respect of the Wentworth Car Park we did not find any evidence that VFM arrangements for Informed Decision Making at the Authority would require a qualification of the VFM Conclusion.

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Appendices

Key issues and recommendations

We have given the recommendation a risk rating and agreed what action management will need to take.

The Authority should closely monitor progress in addressing specific risks and implementing our recommendation.

We will formally follow up this recommendation next year.

Priority rating for recommendations					
❶	***Priority one***: issues that are fundamental and material to your system of internal control. We believe that these issues might mean that you do not meet a system objective or reduce (mitigate) a risk.	❷	***Priority two***: issues that have an important effect on internal controls but do not need immediate action. You may still meet a system objective in full or in part or reduce (mitigate) a risk adequately but the weakness remains in the system.	❸	***Priority three***: issues that would, if corrected, improve the internal control in general but are not vital to the overall system. These are generally issues of best practice that we feel would benefit you if you introduced them.

No.	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response/responsible officer/due date
1	❷	**Repayment dates of development monies** We found that the Authority had not identified repayment dates of development monies that had been received in advance. This affects the Authority's ability to efficiently identify when monies (such as S106) must be repaid by, as well as identifying short term versus long term creditors. **Recommendation** The Authority should ensure that a system is in place that identifies and monitors the repayment dates of development monies.	The Authority has identified repayment periods for current s106 contributions as a result of the issue identified by KPMG. We will record the repayment date for all new contributions received. The Council is currently implementing the 'condition monitoring module' within the Uniform system. The intention is to record s106 and CIL transactions within the module which will facilitate, amongst other things, monitoring of trigger points including repayment dates. It's expected that the module will be operational in the current financial year. **Responsible Officer** Gary Housden, Head of Planning and Housing **Due Date** 31 March 2017

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Audit differences

This appendix sets out the significant audit differences identified during the audit for the year ended 31 March 2016.

It is our understanding that all of these will be adjusted.

We are required by ISA 260 to report all uncorrected misstatements, other than those that we believe are clearly trivial, to those charged with governance (which in your case is the Audit, Overview and Scrutiny Committee). We are also required to report all material misstatements that have been corrected but that we believe should be communicated to you to assist you in fulfilling your governance responsibilities.

Corrected audit differences

The following table sets out the significant audit differences identified by our audit of Ryedale District Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016. These differences have been adjusted.

Impact						
No.	Income and expenditure statement	Movement in reserves statement	Assets	Liabilities	Reserves	Basis of audit difference
1	-	-	-	Cr Long Term Liabilities £1.398 million	-	On inspecting repayment dates of development monies received in advance, it was identified that £1.398m had a repayment date after 12 months and therefore should be moved from short term creditors to long term creditors in the Authority's balance sheet.
2	-	-	-	Dr Short Term Liabilities £1.398 million	-	As above.
				£0		**Total impact of adjustments**

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Audit differences (cont.)

This appendix sets out the audit differences.

The financial statements have been amended for all of the errors identified through the audit process.

We are required by ISA 260 to report all uncorrected misstatements, other than those that we believe are clearly trivial, to those charged with governance (which in your case is the Audit Committee). We are also required to report all material misstatements that have been corrected but that we believe should be communicated to you to assist you in fulfilling your governance responsibilities.

Uncorrected audit differences

We are pleased to report that there are no uncorrected audit differences.

Non material audit differences

A number of minor amendments focused on presentational improvements have also been made to the draft financial statements.

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Materiality and reporting of audit differences

For 2015/16 our materiality is £400,000 for the Authority's accounts and have reported all audit differences over £20,000.

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Materiality

The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgment 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 2015/16.

Materiality for the Authority's accounts was set at £400,000 which equates to around1.6 percent of gross expenditure. We design our procedures to detect errors in specific accounts at a lower level of precision.

Reporting to the Audit Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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 Committee 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 £20,000 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 Audit Overview and Scrutiny Committee 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.

Requirements

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 Audit Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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.

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Declaration of independence and objectivity (cont.)

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

General procedures to safeguard independence and objectivity

KPMG's reputation is built, in great part, upon the conduct of our professionals and their ability to deliver objective and independent advice and opinions. That integrity and objectivity underpins the work that KPMG performs and is important to the regulatory environments in which we operate. All partners and staff have an obligation to maintain the relevant level of required independence and to identify and evaluate circumstances and relationships that may impair that independence.

Acting as an auditor places specific obligations on the firm, partners and staff in order to demonstrate the firm's required independence. KPMG's policies and procedures regarding independence matters are detailed in the *Ethics and Independence Manual* ('the Manual'). The Manual sets out the overriding principles and summarises the policies and regulations which all partners and staff must adhere to in the area of professional conduct and in dealings with clients and others.

KPMG is committed to ensuring that all partners and staff are aware of these principles. To facilitate this, a hard copy of the Manual is provided to everyone annually. The Manual is divided into two parts. Part 1 sets out KPMG's ethics and independence policies which partners and staff must observe both in relation to their personal dealings and in relation to the professional services they provide. Part 2 of the Manual summarises the key risk management policies which partners and staff are required to follow when providing such services.

All partners and staff must understand the personal responsibilities they have towards complying with the policies outlined in the Manual and follow them at all times. To acknowledge understanding of and adherence to the policies set out in the Manual, all partners and staff are required to submit an annual ethics and independence confirmation. Failure to follow these policies can result in disciplinary action.

Auditor declaration

In relation to the audit of the financial statements of Ryedale District Council for the financial year ending 31 March 2016, we confirm that there were no relationships between KPMG LLP and Ryedale District Council, 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.

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Appendix three

Audit Independence

Audit Fees

The scale fee for the audit was £45,424 plus VAT (£55,768 2014/15). This fee was higher than that highlighted within our audit plan agreed by the Audit Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2015 of £41,826 plus VAT. A Scale fee adjustment of £3,598 plus VAT was agreed for the additional VFM risk based work on Wentworth Street Car Park described in Section 4 of this report. Our scale fee for certification for the HBCOUNT was £11,484 plus VAT in 2015/16.

Non-audit services

We have not provided non-audit services to the Authority during 2015/16.

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