EASTBOURNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING REPORT TO THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE Audit for the year ending 31 March 2017

Date of issue: 27 February 2017



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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND USE OF OUR REPORT

The purpose of this report is to highlight and explain the key issues which we believe to be relevant to the audit of the financial statements of the Council and consolidated entities (together the 'Group') and use of resources of the Council for the year ending 31 March 2017. It forms a key part of our communication strategy with you, a strategy which is designed to promote effective two-way communication throughout the audit process. Planning is an iterative process and our plans, reflected in this report, will be reviewed and updated as our audit progresses.

This report has been prepared solely for the use of the Audit and Governance Committee.

In preparing this report, we do not accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose, or to any other person to whom it is shown or into whose hands it may come. If others choose to rely on the contents of this report, they do so entirely at their own risk.

YOUR BDO TEAM

Core team	Name	Contact details	Key responsibilities
Janine Combrinck	Janine Combrinck	Tel: 020 7893 2631	Oversee the audit and sign the audit report
Engagement Lead	Engagement Lead	Janine.Combrinck@bdo.co.uk	
Lucy Trevett	Lucy Trevett	Tel: 020 7034 5878	Management of the audit
Project Manager	Project Manager	Lucy.Trevett@bdo.co.uk	
Tawanda Mutenga	Tawanda Mutenga	Tel: 01473 320711	Day to day supervision of the on-
Senior	Senior	Tawanda.Mutenga@bdo.co.uk	site audit

Janine is the engagement lead and has the primary responsibility to ensure that the appropriate audit opinion is given on the financial statements.

in meeting this responsibility, she will ensure that the audit has resulted in obtaining sufficient and appropriate evidence to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that:

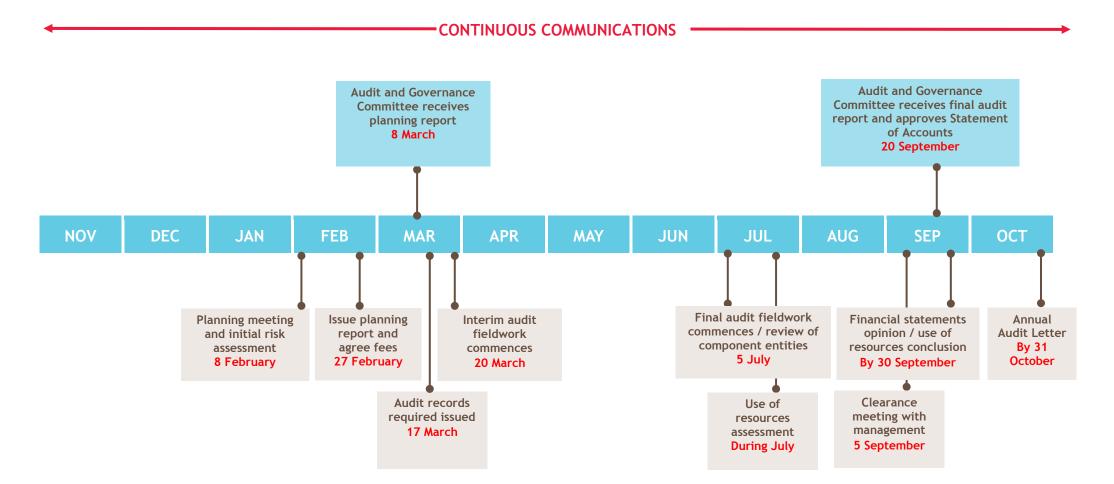
- the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Janine is responsible for the overall quality of the engagement.

ENGAGEMENT TIMETABLE

TIMETABLE

The timeline below identifies the key dates and anticipated meetings for the production and approval of the audited financial statements and completion of the use of resources audit.



AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Our audit scope covers the audit in accordance with the National Audit Office's (NAO) Code of Audit Practice, International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and other guidance issued by the NAO.

To form an opinion on whether:

to the Council.

FINANCIAL S	TATEMENTS	OTHER INFORMATION	WGA CONSOLIDATION	USE OF RESOURCES
The financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Group and Council and its expenditure and income for the period in question.	2 The financial statements have been prepared properly in accordance with the relevant accounting and reporting framework as set out in legislation, applicable accounting standards or other direction.	3 Other information published together with the audited financial statements is consistent with the financial statements (including the governance statement).	4 The return required to facilitate the preparation of Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidated accounts is consistent with the audited financial statements.	5 The Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
ADDITIONAL POW	ERS AND DUTIES			
To consider the issue of a report in the public interest. To consider making a written recommendation	To allow electors to raise questions about the accounts and consider objections. To apply to the court			

To apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law, where necessary.

To consider whether to issue an advisory notice or to make an application for judicial review.

MATERIALITY

GROUP AND COMPONENT MATERIALITY

	MATERIALITY	CLEARLY TRIVIAL THRESHOLD		
Group	£2,100,000	£42,000		
Significant components:	Significant components:			
• Council	£2,100,000	£42,000		
Non-significant components:				
Eastbourne Homes Limited	n/a	n/a		
Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited	n/a	n/a		

Please see Appendix I for detailed definitions of materiality and triviality.

Planning materiality for the Group and the Council has been based on 2% of the prior year gross expenditure. This will be revisited when the draft financial statements are received for audit.

The clearly trivial amount is based on 2% of the materiality level of the Group and the Council.

OVERALL AUDIT STRATEGY

We will perform a risk based audit on the Group and Council's financial statements and the Council's use of resources

This enables us to focus our work on key audit areas.

Our starting point is to document our understanding of the Group, Council and other component entities' businesses and the specific risks it faces. We discussed the changes to the businesses and management's own view of potential audit risk during our planning visit in order to gain an understanding of the activities and to determine which risks impact on our audit. We will continue to update this assessment throughout the audit.

For the financial statements audit, we also confirm our understanding of the accounting systems in order to assess their adequacy as a basis for the preparation of the financial statements, Group-wide controls and the consolidation process, and that proper accounting records have been maintained.

For the use of resources audit, we consider the significance of business and operational risks insofar as they relate to 'proper arrangements', including risks at both sector and Council level, and draw on relevant cost and performance information as appropriate.

We then carry out our audit procedures in response to risks.

Approach to components of the Group financial statements

Our approach is designed to ensure we obtain the requisite level of assurance across the whole Group.

We are aware that there is some uncertainty whether local authority controlled companies are able to take advantage of the size and threshold exemptions for audit or whether the requirement for audit remains in place where the Council itself is preparing consolidated accounts. It is our understanding that local authority controlled companies are not able to take advantage of the audit exemption.

Total coverage is expected to be as shown opposite.

SCOPE	EXPENDITURE COVERAGE 2015/16	NET ASSETS 31/3/16
Full scope procedures	£108m	£180m
Desktop review	£1m	<£1m
Total	£109m	£180m

We do not expect any significant changes in 2016/17.

OVERALL AUDIT STRATEGY Group matters

COMPONENT NAME	% GROUP EXPENDITURE	% GROUP NET ASSETS / LIABILITIES	COMPONENT AUDITOR	OVERVIEW OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED
Full scope procedures:				
Eastbourne Borough Council	> 99 %	>99%	BDO UK	Code audit of the financial statement prepared under CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting
Full scope procedures:				
Eastbourne Homes Limited	<1%	<(1)%	RSM	Analytical review of financial statements prepared by the component entity assessed against expectations and prior year amounts.
				Specific review of calculation of pension fund net liability prepared by the actuary and agreement of management fee income against the Council's expenditure.
Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited	<1%	<(1)%	RSM	We will review the ISA 260 completion reports by the component auditor and consider the impact on our group audit.
				We will consider the accounting implications of conversion from FRS102 to IFRS based accounts under CIPFA's Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

OVERALL AUDIT STRATEGY Continued

Risks and planned audit responses

For the financial statements audit, under International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 315 "Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement through understanding the entity and its environment", we are required to consider significant risks that require special audit attention.

In assessing a risk as significant, we exclude the effects of identified controls related to the risk. The ISA requires us at least to consider:

- Whether the risk is a risk of fraud
- Whether the risk is related to recent significant economic, accounting or other developments and, therefore, requires specific attention
- The complexity of transactions
- Whether the risk involves significant transactions with related parties
- The degree of subjectivity in the measurement of financial information related to the risk, especially those measurements involving a wide range of measurement uncertainty
- Whether the risk involves significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business for the entity, or that otherwise appear to be unusual.

For the use of resources audit, the NAO has provided information on potential significant risks such as:

- Organisational change and transformation
- Significant funding gaps in financial planning
- Legislative or policy changes
- Repeated financial difficulties or persistently poor performance
- Information from other inspectorates and review agencies suggesting governance issues or poor service performance.

We consider the relevance of these risks to the Council in forming our risk assessment and audit strategy.

Internal audit

We will ensure that we maximise the benefit of the overall audit effort carried out by internal audit and ourselves, whilst retaining the necessary independence of view. We understand that internal audit reviews have been undertaken across a range of accounting systems and governance subjects. We will consider these reports as part of our audit planning and consider whether to place any reliance on internal audit work as evidence of the soundness of the control environment.

KEY AUDIT RISKS AND OTHER MATTERS

Key: Significant risk Normal risk Other Issue

RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE
	The primary responsibility for the detection of fraud rests with management. Their role in the detection of fraud is an extension of their role in preventing fraudulent activity.	We will test the appropriateness of journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements.	Not applicable.
Management override	They are responsible for establishing a sound system of internal control designed to support the achievement of departmental policies, aims and objectives and to manage the risks facing the organisation; this includes the risk of fraud.	We will review accounting estimates for biases and evaluate whether the circumstances producing the bias, if any, represent a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.	
	Under International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) 240, there is a presumed significant risk of management override of the system of internal controls.	We will obtain an understanding of the business rationale for significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business for the Council or that otherwise appear to be unusual.	
Revenue	Under auditing Standards there is a presumption that income recognition presents a fraud risk. For local authorities, the risks can be identified as affecting the completeness, accuracy and existence of income.	We will test an increased sample of fees and charges income to underlying documentation and confirm that income has been recorded in the correct period, and that all income that should have been recorded has been	Not applicable.
recognition	We consider there to be a significant risk in relation to the existence and completeness of fees and charges recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES).	recorded.	

RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE
Changes in the presentation of the financial statements	 The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting requires a change to the presentation of some areas of the financial statements. This includes: Change to the format of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) based on the Council's directorate structure and reporting to members Change to the format of the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) New Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) note Change to the Segmental Reporting note New Expenditure and Income analysis note. These changes will require a restatement of comparative figures. There is a risk that these presentational changes are not correctly applied in the financial statements. 	We will review the draft financial statements and check these against the CiPFA Disclosure Checklist to ensure that all of the required presentational changes have been correctly reflected within the financial statements.	Not applicable.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE
Valuation of non-current assets	Local authorities are required to ensure that the carrying value of non-current assets is not materially different to the current value (operational assets) or fair value (surplus assets, assets held for sale and investment properties) at the balance sheet date. The Council appointed an external valuer to carry out a full revaluation as at 1 April 2016, and a further desktop review will be performed as at 31 March 2017. Due to the significant value of the Council's non-current assets, and the high degree of estimation uncertainty where valuations are based on assumptions, there is a risk over the valuation of non-current assets.	We will review the instructions provided to the valuer and review the valuer's skills and expertise in order to determine if we can rely on the management expert. We will confirm that the basis of valuation for assets is appropriate. We will confirm that an instant build modern equivalent asset basis has been used for assets valued at depreciated replacement costs and that investment properties and surplus assets have been valued based on 'highest and best use.' We will review valuation movements against indices of price movements for similar classes of assets and follow up valuation movements that appear unusual against indices, or any assets which may have had material movements through the year.	We will review independent data that shows indices and price movements for classes of assets against the percentage movement applied by the Council.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE
Recharges between the Council and Lewes District Council	The Council is currently in the process of undergoing a major Joint Transformation Programme (JTP) with Lewes District Council to merge frontline services and back office functions. In February 2017, the vast majority of Lewes District Council employees were transferred onto the Council's payroll and there are recharging arrangements in place for each of the five service areas (Corporate Management Team, Legal Services, Information Technology, Human Resources and Asset Management). There is a risk over the completeness and accuracy of the payroll information transferred from the Lewes payroll system (Midland Trent) onto the Eastbourne payroll system (Chris21). On a monthly basis the Council will calculate, based on these arrangements, the amount to be recharged via invoice back to Lewes District Council. There is a risk over the completeness and accuracy of these recharges. As the risks and rewards of these arrangements are shared by both Councils, the transactions should be accounted for on a net basis within each Council's financial statements. There is a risk that these transactions may not be correctly presented in the Council's financial statements, thereby overstating income and expenditure. Manual adjustments will be required by the Council in calculating the senior officers' remuneration disclosures. There is a risk over the completeness and accuracy of these disclosures.	We will review the work performed by internal audit to test the migration of data from the Lewes to Eastbourne payroll systems, and associated reconciliations. We will carry out further testing as necessary to obtain assurance over the completeness and accuracy of the employee data transferred. We will review the reasonableness and accuracy of the recharge arrangements in place between the Councils and the manual adjustments made to record shared employee and other costs on a net accounting basis. We will review the senior officer's remuneration note to ensure that the disclosures for senior managers and employees earning over £50,000 are complete and accurate and that the Council's share of the costs are in line with the relevant recharge arrangement.	Not applicable.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE
Group Accounts	The Council holds 49% of the voting rights and 21% of the non- voting rights in Welbeing and 25% of the shares in CloudConnx. These are considered to be associates, as the Council has significant influence but not control over these organisations. Historically the Council has not included these organisations in its Group Accounts as their transactions have not been material. Welbeing has now completed its fourth year of operation and it is possible that accumulated retained profits have increased to a material level. This would require the transactions in both Welbeing and CloudConnx, if cumulatively material, to be included in the Council's Group Accounts, using equity accounting. There is a risk that income, expenditure, assets and liabilities in the Group Accounts will not be complete if the Council does not account for its share of material transactions in Welbeing and CloudConnx.	We will review the financial statements and management accounts of Welbeing and CloudConnx, to determine if they need to be included in the Council's Group Accounts on the grounds of materiality. We will review the Group Accounts and check that assets, liabilities, income and expenditure and relevant disclosures have been consolidated into the Council's Group Accounts where necessary.	Not applicable.

AUDIT RISK AREAS - FINANCIAL STATEMENTS					
RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE		
Pension liability assumptions	The net pension liability comprises the Council's share of the market value of assets held in the East Sussex County Council's Pension Fund and the estimated future liability to pay pensions. An actuarial estimate of the pension fund liability is calculated by an independent firm of actuaries with specialist knowledge and experience. The estimate is based on the most up to date membership data held by the pension fund and has regard to local factors such as mortality rates and expected pay rises along with other assumptions around inflation when calculating the liability. There is a risk the valuation is not based on accurate membership data or uses inappropriate assumptions to value the liability.	We will agree the disclosures to the information provided by the pension fund actuary. We will review the reasonableness of the assumptions used in the calculation against other local government actuaries and other observable data. We will obtain assurance from the auditor of the pension fund over the controls for providing accurate membership data to the actuary. We will check whether any significant changes in membership data has been communicated to the actuary.	We will agree the disclosures to the report received from the actuary. We will use the PwC consulting actuary report for the review of the methodology of the actuary and reasonableness of the assumptions.		
Fraud and Error	We are required to discuss with you the possibility of material misstatement, due to fraud or error, and to reassess this throughout the audit. We are informed by management that there have not been any cases of material fraud or error, to their knowledge.	We will continue to consider throughout the audit process and discuss with management.	Not applicable.		

AUDIT RISK AREAS - USE OF RESOURCES

RISK	DESCRIPTION	PLANNED AUDIT RESPONSE	EXTERNAL DATA TO BE USED TO CORROBORATE AUDIT EVIDENCE
	The update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2019/20 has forecast further reductions in Government core grant funding, falling New Homes Bonus funding from 2017/18 and annual inflationary and pay award pressures. Budget gaps have been identified in 2016/17 (£0.6 million), 2017/18 (£1.1 million), 2018/19 (£1.0 million) and 2019/20 (£1.0 million), resulting in an average level of required savings of £940,000 per annum over the four year period. The Council currently has a number of major development / transformation programmes in place to either help facilitate these savings or create additional revenue streams in the medium term, to close the	We will review the assumptions used in the MTFS for investment costs and savings associated with major development / transformation programmes. We will review the Council's arrangements for monitoring the progress of these programmes against the budgeted savings targets.	Not applicable
	budget gaps. These programmes include:		
Sustainable finances	 Joint transformation programme with Lewes District Council to provide joint services 		
	 Major project for the enhancement of the current Devonshire Park Complex 		
	 Residential and commercial leasing by Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited 		
	Procurement for the redevelopment of the Sovereign Centre		
	 Procurement for the redevelopment of the Wish Tower restaurant 		
	• Procurement for a joint venture energy scheme.		
	There is a risk that the MTFS does not adequately take account of the investment costs and savings associated with these projects, and that the Council does not have appropriate arrangements to monitor progress in delivering benefits from these projects against the MTFS.		

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INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE

Under Auditing and Ethical Standards, we are required as auditors to confirm our independence to 'those charged with governance'. In our opinion, and as confirmed by you, we consider that for these purposes it is appropriate to designate the Audit and Governance Committee as those charged with governance.

Our internal procedures are designed to ensure that all partners and professional staff are aware of relationships that may be considered to have a bearing on our objectivity and independence as auditors. The principal statements of policies are set out in our firm-wide guidance. In addition, we have embedded the requirements of the Standards in our methodologies, tools and internal training programmes. The procedures require that engagement leads are made aware of any matters which may reasonably be thought to bear on the firm's independence and the objectivity of the engagement lead and the audit staff. This document considers such matters in the context of our audit for the period ending 31 March 2017.

We have not identified any potential threats to our independence as auditors.

We confirm that the firm complies with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standards for Auditors and, in our professional judgement, is independent and objective within the meaning of those Standards.

In our professional judgement the policies and safeguards in place ensure that we are independent within the meaning of all regulatory and professional requirements and that the objectivity of the audit engagement lead and audit staff is not impaired. These policies include director and manager rotation. The table in appendix II sets out the length of involvement of key members of the audit team and the planned year of rotation.

Should you have any comments or queries regarding this confirmation we would welcome their discussion in more detail.

FEES SUMMARY

Our proposed fees, excluding VAT, for the year ending 31 March 2017 are:				
	2016/17	2015/16		
	£	£		
Audit fee	67,781	67,781		
Certification fee (Housing benefits subsidy claim)	8,297	8,297		
Total audit and certification fees:	76,078	76,078		
Fees for audit related services (Pooled capital receipts return)	1,500	1,500		
Fees for non-audit services *	-	2,500		
TOTAL FEES	77,578	80,078		

Our fee is based on the following assumptions

The complete draft financial statements and supporting work papers will be prepared to a standard suitable for audit. All balances will be reconciled to underlying accounting records.

Key dates will be met, including receipt of draft accounts and working papers prior to commencement of the final audit fieldwork.

We will receive only one draft of the Statement of Accounts prior to receiving the final versions for signing.

Within reason, personnel we require to hold discussions with will be available during the period of our on-site work (we will set up meetings with key staff in advance).

* BDO tax subscription service which ended in 2015/16.

Audit fee invoices are being raised in quarterly instalment of £16,945.25 during 2016/17.

Fee invoices for other audit related services will be raised as the work is completed.

APPENDIX I: MATERIALITY

CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

- The concept of materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to monetary misstatements but also to disclosure requirements and adherence to appropriate accounting principles and statutory requirements.
- We apply the concept of materiality both in planning and performing our audit, and in evaluating the effect of misstatements. For planning, we consider materiality to be the magnitude by which misstatements, including omissions, could influence the economic decisions of reasonable users that are taken on the basis of the financial statements. In order to reduce to an appropriately low level the probability that any misstatements exceed materiality, we use a lower materiality level, performance materiality, to determine the extent of testing needed. Importantly, misstatements below these levels will not necessarily be evaluated as immaterial as we also take account of the nature of identified misstatements, and the particular circumstances of their occurrence, when evaluating their effect on the financial statements as a whole.
- Materiality therefore has qualitative as well as quantitative aspects and an item may be considered material, irrespective of its size, if it has an impact on (for example):
 - Narrative disclosure e.g. accounting policies, going concern
 - Instances when greater precision is required (e.g. senior management remuneration disclosures).
- International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) also allow the auditor to set a lower level of materiality for particular classes of transaction, account balances or disclosures for which misstatements of lesser amounts than materiality for the financial statements as a whole could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

CALCULATION AND DETERMINATION

- We have determined materiality based on professional judgement in the context of our knowledge of the Council, including consideration of factors such as sector developments, financial stability and reporting requirements for the financial statements.
- We determine materiality in order to:
 - Assist in establishing the scope of our audit engagement and audit tests
 - Calculate sample sizes
 - Assist in evaluating the effect of known and likely misstatements on the financial statements.

APPENDIX I: MATERIALITY Continued

REASSESSMENT OF MATERIALITY

- We will reconsider materiality if, during the course of our audit engagement, we become aware of facts and circumstances that would have caused us to make a different determination of planning materiality if we had been aware.
- Further, when we have performed all our tests and are ready to evaluate the results of those tests (including any misstatements we detected) we will reconsider whether materiality combined with the nature, timing and extent of our auditing procedures, provided a sufficient audit scope. If we conclude that our audit scope was sufficient, we will use materiality to evaluate whether uncorrected misstatements (individually or in aggregate) are material.
- You should be aware that any misstatements that we identify during our audit, both corrected and uncorrected errors, might result in additional audit procedures being necessary.

UNADJUSTED ERRORS

- In accordance with auditing standards, we will communicate to the Audit and Governance Committee all uncorrected misstatements identified during our audit, other than those which we believe are 'clearly trivial'.
- Clearly trivial is defined as matters which will be of a wholly different (smaller) order of magnitude than the materiality thresholds used in the audit, and will be matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate.
- We will obtain written representations from the Audit and Governance Committee confirming that in their opinion these uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate and that, in the context of the financial statements taken as a whole, no adjustments are required.
- There are a number of areas where we would strongly recommend/request any misstatements identified during the audit process being adjusted. These include:
 - Clear cut errors whose correction would cause non-compliance with statutory requirements, management remuneration, other contractual obligations or governmental regulations that we consider are significant.
 - Other misstatements that we believe are material or clearly wrong.

APPENDIX II: INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE - ENGAGEMENT TEAM ROTATION		
SENIOR TEAM MEMBERS	NUMBER OF YEARS INVOLVED	ROTATION TO TAKE PLACE IN YEAR ENDED
Janine Combrinck - Engagement lead	2 nd year as engagement lead and 2 years as project manager	31 March 2021
Lucy Trevett - Project manager	1 st year as project manager	31 March 2027

The matters raised in our report prepared in connection with the audit are those we believe should be brought to your attention. They do not purport to be a complete record of all matters arising. This report is prepared solely for the use of the organisation and may not be quoted nor copied without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted.

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