



Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board

Audit Strategy

Year ending 31 March 2022

Risk, Audit and Performance Committee 26 April 2022

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About this report

This report has been prepared in accordance with the responsibilities set out within the Audit Scotland's *Code of Audit Practice* ("the Code").

This report is for the benefit of Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board and is made available to Audit Scotland and the Controller of Audit (together "the Beneficiaries"). This report has not been designed to be of benefit to anyone except the Beneficiaries. In preparing this report we have not taken into account the interests, needs or circumstances of anyone apart from the Beneficiaries, even though we may have been aware that others might read this report. We have prepared this report for the benefit of the Beneficiaries alone.

Nothing in this report constitutes an opinion on a valuation or legal advice.

We have not verified the reliability or accuracy of any information obtained in the course of our work, other than in the limited circumstances set out in the scoping and purpose section of this report.

This report is not suitable to be relied on by any party wishing to acquire rights against KPMG LLP (other than the Beneficiaries) for any purpose or in any context. Any party other than the Beneficiaries that obtains access to this report or a copy (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, through a Beneficiary's Publication Scheme or otherwise) and chooses to rely on this report (or any part of it) does so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, KPMG LLP does not assume any responsibility and will not accept any liability in respect of this report to any party other than the Beneficiaries.

Restrictions on distribution

This report is intended solely for the information of those charged with governance of the Board and the report is provided on the basis that it should not be distributed to other parties; that it will not be quoted or referred to, in whole or in part, without our prior written consent; and that we accept no responsibility to any third party in relation to it.

Complaints

If at any time you would like to discuss with us how our services can be improved or if you have a complaint about them, you are invited to contact Michael Wilkie, who is the engagement leader for our services to Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board, telephone 0141 300 5890 email: michael.wilkie@kpmg.co.uk, who will try to resolve your complaint. If your problem is not resolved, you should contact Hugh Harvie, our Head of Audit in Scotland, either by writing to him at Saltire Court, 20 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2EG or by telephoning 0131 527 6682 or email to hugh.harvie@kpmg.co.uk. We will investigate any complaint promptly and do what we can to resolve the difficulties. After this, if you are still dissatisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can refer the matter to Diane McGiffen, Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh, EH3 9DN.

Introduction

2021-22 is the sixth year of our external audit appointment to Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board (“the Board”), having been appointed by the Accounts Commission as auditor of the Board under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (“the Act”). The period of appointment is 2016-17 to 2021-22, inclusive, as extended by Audit Scotland.

Our planned work in 2021-22 will include:

- an audit of the financial statements and provision of an opinion on whether the financial statements:
 - give a true and fair view in accordance with the applicable law and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (“the 2021-22 Code”) of the state of the affairs of the Board as at 31 March 2022 and of the income and expenditure of the Board for the year then ended; and
 - have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (“IFRS”) as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2021-22 Code, the requirements of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
- completion of returns to Audit Scotland;
- a review and assessment of the Board’s governance arrangements and review of the governance statement;
- a review of arrangements for preparing and publishing statutory performance information; and
- contributing to the audit of wider scope and Best Value through performance of risk assessed work.

How we deliver audit quality

Audit quality is at the core of everything we do at KPMG and we believe that it is not just about reaching the right opinion, but how we reach that opinion. We consider risks

to the quality of our audit in our engagement risk assessment and planning discussions.

We define ‘audit quality’ as being the outcome when audits are:

- executed consistently, in line with the requirements and intent of applicable professional standards within a strong system of quality controls; and
- all of our related activities are undertaken in an environment of the outmost level of objectivity, independence, ethics and integrity.

Adding value

Throughout the audit, we will consider opportunities to add value and will conclude on this in our annual audit report. We add value through:

- our experience, which brings insight and challenge;
- our tools and approach, which contribute to audit quality; and
- transparency and efficiency, which improves value for money.

Our team

The team has significant experience in the audit of local authorities and integration joint boards. All members of the team are part of our wider local government and health network. The engagement lead is Michael Wilkie, and is responsible for the audit opinion, and engagement manager is Matthew Moore. Michael has many years’ experience within the public sector and specifically in respect of integration joint boards. Their contact details are provided on the back page of this report.

Our work will be completed in three phases from December 2021 to September 2022. Our key deliverables are this audit strategy document and an annual audit report.

Acknowledgements

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

Headlines

Materiality

Materiality for planning purposes has been based on 2021-22 estimated gross expenditure and set at £3.7 million (1% of gross expenditure). We will review gross expenditure on receipt of draft accounts for 2021-22, and assess whether we are required to update this calculated materiality.

In line with the Code of Audit Practice, we are obliged to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance and this threshold has been set at £0.185 million.

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Audit risks

We have identified management override of controls as a default fraud risk which requires specific audit attention, in line with the International Standards on Auditing ("ISA") and plan to consider this risk as part of our standard audit approach.

The risks with less likelihood of giving rise to a material error, but which are nevertheless worthy of audit understanding, relate to:

- completeness and accuracy of expenditure;
- financial sustainability; and
- grant funding accounting (including COVID-19 grants)

We plan to consider each of these areas, and will report on our findings in our annual audit report which we plan to issue in September 2022.

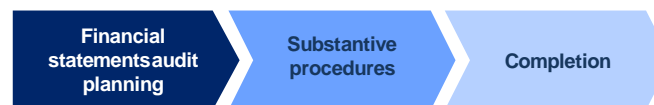
Pages 7 to 9

Financial statement audit

Our financial statements audit work follows a three stage audit process which is identified below. [Appendix three](#) provides more detail on the activities that this includes. This report concentrates on the audit planning stage of the financial statements audit.



These stages are:



There are no significant changes to the 2021-22 Code, which means for this year there is consistency in terms of accounting standards the Board needs to apply.

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Wider scope

Auditors are required to assess and provide conclusions in the Annual Audit Report in respect of four wider scope dimensions:

- financial sustainability;
- financial management;
- governance and transparency; and
- value for money.

We test wider scope areas where there are identified risks. We consider that there are wider scope risks in respect of demand pressures and the transformation programme. We have identified financial sustainability as a wider scope financial statement level focus area as set out opposite.

In addition, due to ongoing challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will consider the impact, and the Board's response to pressures as part of our risk assessment procedures and wider scope responsibilities. Audit Scotland have also specified consideration of the risk of fraud at audited entities, which we have extended to consider the Board's approach to managing fraud risk in respect of procurement.

Pages 11 to 15

Headlines (continued)

Independence

In accordance with ISA 260 and the Financial Reporting Council's ("FRC") Ethical Standards, we are required to communicate to you all relationships between KPMG and the Board that may be reasonably thought to have bearing on our independence both:

- at the planning stage; and
- whenever significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place.

[Appendix two](#) contains our confirmation of independence and any other matters relevant to our independence.

Total fees charged by us for the period ended 31 March 2021 were communicated in our Annual Audit Report issued in September 2021. Total fees for 2021-22 will be presented in our annual audit report issued on completion of the audit. The proposed audit fee for 2021-22, as agreed with those charged with governance, is £27,960 as set out below:

Total fee	Pooled costs	Contribution to PABV (Audit Scotland)	Contribution to Audit Scotland	Auditor remuneration (including VAT)
£27,960	£2,010	£5,670	£1,030	£23,100

Quality

International Standard on Quality Control (UK and Ireland) 1 ("ISQC1") requires that a system of quality control is established, as part of financial audit procedures, to provide reasonable assurance that professional standards and regulatory and legal requirements are being complied with and that the independent auditor's report or opinion is appropriate in the circumstances.

Our Audit Quality Framework and KPMG Audit Manual comply with ISQC1. Our UK Senior Partner has ultimate responsibility for quality control. Operational responsibility is delegated to our Head of Quality & Risk who sets overall risk management and quality control policies. These are cascaded through our Head of Audit in Scotland and ultimately to Michael Wilkie as the Director leading delivery of services to the Council.

The nature of our services is such that we are subject to internal and external quality reviews. KPMG UK's annual financial statements include our UK transparency report which summarises the results of various quality results and developments over the course of each year.

We also provide Audit Scotland with details of how we comply with ISQC1 and an annual summary of our achievement of key performance indicators and quality results.

We welcome your comments or feedback related to this strategy and our service overall.

Regularity

We consider the risk of fraud and error over income and expenditure recognition, in line with *Practice Note 10 Audit of financial statements of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom*. As the Board is a net spending body, we consider it appropriate to extend our consideration to cover expenditure as well as income. We do not consider there to be a significant risk over income or expenditure, see page seven. We have identified the completeness and accuracy of expenditure as an other focus area, see page eight.

Financial statements audit planning

Materiality

We are required to plan our audit to determine with reasonable confidence whether or not the financial statements are free from material misstatement. An omission or misstatement is regarded as material if it would reasonably influence the user of financial statements. This therefore involves an assessment of the qualitative and quantitative nature of omissions and misstatements.

Generally, we would not consider differences in opinion in respect of areas of judgement to represent 'misstatements' unless the application of that judgement results in a financial amount falling outside of a range which we consider to be acceptable.

Materiality for planning purposes has been set at £3.7 million (2020-21 £3.5 million), which equates to 1% of 2021-22 gross expenditure (2020-21: 1% of gross expenditure). Materiality will be revised once draft financial statements for 2021-22 are received.

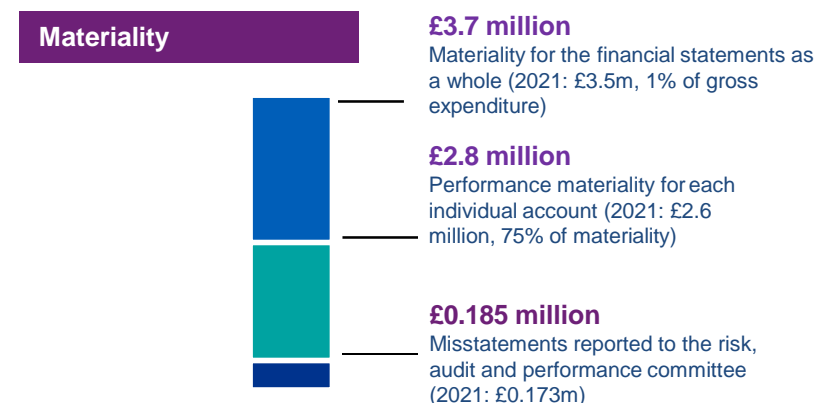
To respond to aggregation risk from individually immaterial misstatements, we design our procedures to detect misstatements at a lower level of materiality for the IJB of £2.8 million (2020-21: £2.6 million).

Risk, Audit and Performance Committee

Under ISA 260, we are obliged to report uncorrected 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.

In the context of the Board, we propose that an individual difference could normally be considered to be clearly trivial if it is less than £0.185 million.

If management has corrected material misstatements identified during the course of the audit, we will communicate such corrected misstatements to the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee to assist it in fulfilling its governance responsibilities.



Control environment

The impact of the control environment on our audit is reflected in our planned audit procedures. Our planned audit procedures reflect findings raised in the previous year and management's response to those findings. We will assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on key controls, which may result in subsequent changes in our audit approach.

Timing of our audit and communications

We will maintain communication led by the engagement lead and senior manager throughout the audit. We set out our communications in Appendix three.

Financial statements audit planning (continued)



Significant risks and other focus areas

Risk assessment: Our planning work takes place during February and March 2022. This involves: risk assessment; determining the materiality level; and issuing this audit plan to communicate our audit strategy. We use our knowledge of the Board, discussions with management and review of Board papers to identify areas of risk and audit focus categorised into financial risks and wider dimension risks as set out in the Code.

Significant risk	The risk	Planned response
Financial statement risks		
Fraud risk from management override of controls	Professional standards require us to communicate the fraud risk from management override of controls as a significant risk; as 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 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 the audit of the Board. — Strong oversight of finances by management provides additional review of potential material errors caused by management override of controls. — In line with our methodology, we will carry out appropriate substantive procedures, including over journal entries, accounting estimates and significant transactions that are outside the organisation's normal course of business, or are otherwise unusual.
Fraud risk from income revenue recognition and expenditure	Professional standards, as interpreted by Practice Note 10 <i>Audit of financial statements of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom</i> require us to make a rebuttable presumption that the fraud risk from revenue recognition and expenditure are significant risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The Board receives funding requisitions from Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian. These are agreed in advance of the financial year, with any changes arising from changes in need, requiring approval from each body. There is no estimation or judgement in recognising this stream of income and we do not regard the risk of fraud to be significant. — The Board works with Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian in order to deliver services delegated by the Board. The Board makes these directions based on its budget agreed in advance of the financial year. There is no estimation or judgement in recognising expenditure to these bodies, and we do not regard the risk of fraud to be significant.

Financial statements audit planning (continued)



Other focus area	The risk	Planned approach
Financial statement focus area		
Completeness and accuracy of expenditure	The Board's integrated finance team, led by the Chief Finance Officer, prepare expenditure forecasts as part of the annual budgeting process. There is a risk that actual expenditure and resulting funding is not correctly captured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Our substantive audit will obtain support for gross expenditure included in Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian's accounting records. We will obtain confirmations of expenditure from each of these bodies.
Financial sustainability	Financial sustainability looks forward to the medium and longer term to consider whether the Board is planning effectively to continue to deliver its services or the way in which they should be delivered. This is inherently a risk to the Board given the challenging environment where funding is reduced and efficiency savings are required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The Board receives funding from NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council, and as part of an Integration Scheme, has a risk sharing agreement with both bodies. This agreement stipulates overspends should be met through the use of reserves where possible, otherwise these bodies must make an additional one-off payment on the basis of each body's proportionate share of baseline contributions to the Board. This gives the Board comfort with regards to overspends, however, there is a risk going forward regarding ongoing budget balance, specifically in the context of challenging NHS and Council Budgets that are expected into 2022.23 — Covid 19 funding has had a significant impact on the year end balances with significant funding expected to increase reserves at the year ended 31.3.2022, however with suspected pressures in 2022.23 from expected increased demand and budget pressures the use of these reserves will be needed to help transform services for future years. — We will consider the Board's financial planning, reserves strategy, and Board's use of reserves, concluding on the appropriateness of these in our annual audit report. — See page 13 for further information regarding the financial sustainability wider scope.

Financial statements audit planning (continued)



Other focus area	The risk	Planned approach
Financial statement focus area		
<p>Grant funding accounting</p>	<p>As part of the economic support provided by the Scottish government, the IJB will need to consider the continued accounting treatment for Covid-19 related grants as well as other additional grant funding.</p> <p>Due to the complexity, development of guidance and relative inexperience of administering the schemes, there remains an element of risk of fraud and error in respect of payments made periods to which funding relates, applicable funding restrictions and disclosure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We will inquire of Officers how the partners and the IJB plan to account for the grants in respect of potential accruals, prepayments and provisions or liabilities. — We will inquire of Officers to determine how the partner bodies administer any grants or payments provided, and how the IJB obtain sufficient assurance that these payments are correctly made and that any related funding restrictions or conditions are correctly accounted for, including any applicable disclosure. — We will consider and report upon whether the required accounting treatment within the annual accounts is appropriately made in respect of CIPFA / LASAAC guidance and the 2021-22 Code.

Other matters

Accounting framework update

There are no significant changes in the accounting framework that require disclosure other than those potential changes described in the Covid-19: Audit implications section opposite.

Controls testing

In respect of the financial statements, we identify the constituent account balances and significant classes of transactions and focus our work on identified risks. Determining the most effective balance of internal controls and substantive audit testing enables us to ensure the audit process runs smoothly and with the minimum disruption to the Board's finance team.

We have not identified any action points in 2020-21. [Appendix three](#) summarises our approach across each phase of the audit.

Internal audit

ISA 610 *Considering the work of internal audit* requires us to:

- consider the activities of internal audit and their effect, if any, on external audit procedures;
- obtain an understanding of internal audit activities to assist in planning the audit and developing an effective audit approach;
- perform a preliminary assessment of the internal audit function when it appears that internal audit is relevant to our audit of the financial statements in specific audit areas; and
- evaluate and test the work of internal audit, where use is made of that work, in order to confirm its adequacy for our purposes.

We will continue liaising with internal audit and update our understanding of its approach and conclusions where relevant. The general programme of work will be reviewed for significant issues to support our work in assessing the statement of internal control.

Covid-19: Audit implications

We report our assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on our planned audit scope, timing, materiality, audit procedures, and fees.

- The **planned scope and timing** of our audit has not changed significantly from the prior year to respond to any assessed risks of material misstatement.
- Given the rapidly changing environment, the **scope and timing** of our audit may need to be modified further to respond to new events or changing conditions. If we make significant changes, then we will communicate these to you. We anticipate considering management's assessment of the treatment, value and number of claims or disbursements of various government grants and funding streams which are new and associated with Covid-19.
- **Materiality** for the financial statements as a whole has been maintained from the prior year due to increased demand and expenditure required to maintain service delivery.
- Due to the rapidly evolving situation, determining whether **subsequent events** should be reflected (adjusting) vs. disclosed (non-adjusting) in the financial statements may require significant judgement, and more subsequent events may be identified.
- Our **audit procedures** will be adjusted to respond to any increased risks of material misstatement, and we highlight the risk of potential delays to the completion of our audit to enable us to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence to support our audit opinion.
- We do not anticipate any changes to our procedures or risk assessment in respect of the Board's ability to continue as a **going concern**.
- Based on the efficient working relationship between KPMG and the finance team in 2020-21, we do not anticipate adjusting our **audit fee** beyond that proposed on page five.

Wider scope and Best Value

Approach

We are required to assess and provide conclusions in the Annual Audit Report in respect of four wider scope dimensions: financial sustainability; financial management; governance and transparency; and value for money. We set out below an overview of our approach to wider scope and Best Value requirements of our annual audit.

We provide on pages 13 to 15 our risk assessment in respect of these areas.

Risk assessment

We consider the relevance and significance of the potential business risks faced by Integration Joint Boards, and other risks that apply specifically to the Board. These are the significant operational and financial risks in achieving statutory functions and objectives, which are relevant to auditors' responsibilities under the *Code of Audit Practice*.

In doing so we consider:

- The Board's own assessment of the risks it faces, and its arrangements to manage and address its risks.
- Evidence gained from previous audit work, including the response to that work.

We use the shared risk assessment process to consider if there are wider scope risks relevant to the Annual Audit Report.



Linkages with other audit work

There is a degree of overlap between the work we do as part of the wider scope/Best Value and our financial statements audit. For example, our financial statements audit includes an assessment and testing of the control environment, many aspects of which are relevant to our wider scope audit responsibilities.

We always seek to avoid duplication of audit effort by integrating our financial statements and wider scope/Best Value work, and this will continue. We consider information gathered through the shared risk assessment and the Audit Commission's five strategic priorities when planning and conducting our work.



Wider scope and Best Value (continued)

Approach (continued)

Identification of significant risks

The Code identifies a matter as significant *'if, in the auditor's professional view, it is reasonable to conclude that the matter would be of interest to the audited body or the wider public. Significance has both qualitative and quantitative aspects.'*

If we identify significant wider scope risks, we will highlight the risk to the Board and consider the most appropriate audit response in each case, including:

- Considering the results of work by the Board, inspectorates and other review agencies.
- Carrying out local risk-based work to form a view on the adequacy of the Board's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.



Concluding on wider scope and Best Value

At the conclusion of the wider scope/Best Value testing we will consider the results of the work undertaken and assess the assurance obtained against each of the wider scope audit dimensions, regarding the adequacy of the Board's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

If any issues are identified that may be significant to this assessment, and in particular if there are issues that indicate we may need to consider qualifying our wider scope conclusion, we will discuss these with management as soon as possible. Such issues will also be considered more widely as part of KPMG's quality control processes, to help ensure the consistency of auditors' decisions.



Reporting

We have completed our initial wider scope risk assessment and have not identified any significant risks, as noted on the pages 13-15. We will update our assessment throughout the year and should any issues present themselves we will report them in our Annual Audit Report.

We will report on the results of the wider scope and Best Value work through our Annual Audit Report. This will summarise any specific matters arising, and the basis for our overall conclusion.



Wider scope and Best Value (continued)

Risk assessment

We have not identified any financial statement significant risks in relation to wider scope and Best Value.

Wider scope area	Why	Audit approach
<p>Financial sustainability and financial management</p>	<p>Financial management is concerned with financial capacity, sound budgetary processes and whether the control environment and internal controls are operating effectively.</p> <p>Financial sustainability looks forward to the medium and longer term to consider whether the Board is planning effectively to continue to deliver its services or the way in which they should be delivered.</p> <p>Specific identified focus areas:</p> <p>Demand pressures and the transformation programme</p> <p>This is inherently a risk to the Board given the challenging environment where funding is unlikely to increase and efficiency savings are required to meet the demand pressures for services, in particular GP Prescribing burden and cost pressures such as the Scottish Living Wage and National drug costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We will obtain an understanding of the Board’s financial position and year end outturn position through review of board reports and other management information. We will assess management’s progress with implementation of efficiency savings. Commentary and analysis on these areas will be provided within the annual audit report. — We will perform substantive procedures, including substantive analytical procedures, over income and expenditure comparing the final position to budget. — The Board receives funding from NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council, and has a risk sharing agreement in place with both bodies. It is noted that Scottish Government has indicated additional funding to the IJB for the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years. This will assist the IJB to rebuild and scale up services and to limit the impact of the financial positions of its partners, NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council (refer to page 8) — We will consider the Board’s financial planning and reserves strategy and conclude on the appropriateness of these in our annual audit report.

Wider scope and Best Value (continued)

Risk assessment (continued)

Wider scope area	Why	Audit approach
Financial sustainability and financial management (continued)	<p>Specific identified focus areas (continued):</p> <p>Covid-19</p> <p>As an entity with strategic responsibilities for health and social care in Aberdeen, the Covid-19 pandemic has an inherent impact on the Board's financial health, and those decisions made by the Board on public health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We will consider the transparency, regularity and adequacy of information presented to the Board in order to support effective decision making. — We will consider whether any changes to the governance structure as a result of national and regional social restrictions are sufficient for democratic governance. — We will review the Board's budget setting process in order to conclude whether identified Covid-19 services and pressures are appropriately resourced. We will also consider how officers advise members on the current financial position in respect of Covid-19 pressures.
Governance and transparency	<p>Governance and transparency is concerned with the effectiveness of scrutiny and governance arrangements, leadership and decision making, and transparent reporting of financial and performance information.</p> <p>Specific identified focus area:</p> <p>Audit Scotland planning guidance requires us to consider the matters opposite.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We will consider the effectiveness of scrutiny and governance arrangements, by evaluating the challenge and transparency of the reporting of financial and performance information. — We will update our understanding of the controls and processes around capturing officers' and Board members' interests. — We will obtain and review minutes of meetings of the various committees to assess the level of transparency, and consider the Board's plan for enhancing transparency.

Wider scope and Best Value (continued)

Risk assessment (continued)

Wider scope area	Why	Audit approach
Value for money	Value for money is concerned with how effectively resources are used to provide services.	— We will specifically consider performance indicators, performance reporting and arrangements to provide for continuous improvement.



Appendices

Mandated communications with the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee

Matters to be communicated	Link to Riak, Audit and Performance Committee papers
Independence and our quality procedures ISA 260 (UK and Ireland).	— See page 18.
The general approach and overall scope of the audit, including levels of materiality, fraud and engagement letter ISA 260 (UK and Ireland).	— Main body of this paper
— Disagreement with management about matters that, individually or in aggregate, could be significant to the entity's financial statements or the auditor's report, and their resolution (AU 380).	— In the event of such matters of significance we would expect to communicate with the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee throughout the year. — Formal reporting will be included in our annual audit report for the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee meeting, which focuses on the financial statements.
— Significant difficulties we encountered during the audit. — Significant matters discussed, or subject to correspondence, with management (ISA 260).	
— Our views about the qualitative aspects of the entity's accounting and financial reporting. — The potential effect on the financial statements of any material risks and exposures, such as pending litigation, that are required to be disclosed in the financial statements (ISA 260 and ISA 540).	
— Audit adjustments, whether or not recorded by the entity, that have, or could have, a material effect on its financial statements. We will request you to correct uncorrected misstatements (including disclosure misstatements) (ISA 450).	
— The selection of, or changes in, significant accounting policies and practices that have, or could have, a material effect on the entity's financial statements (ISA 570).	
— Material uncertainties related to events and conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern (ISA 570).	
— Expected modifications to the auditor's report (ISA 705).	
— Related party transactions that are not appropriately disclosed (ISA 550)	

Auditor Independence

Assessment of our objectivity and independence as auditor of Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board (the Board)

Professional ethical standards require us to provide to you at the planning stage of the audit a written disclosure of relationships (including the provision of non-audit services) that bear on KPMG LLP's objectivity and independence, the threats to KPMG LLP's independence that these create, any safeguards that have been put in place and why they address such threats, together with any other information necessary to enable KPMG LLP's objectivity and independence to be assessed.

This letter is intended to comply with this requirement and facilitate a subsequent discussion with you on audit independence and addresses:

- General procedures to safeguard independence and objectivity;
- Independence and objectivity considerations relating to the provision of non-audit services; and
- Independence and objectivity considerations relating to other matters.

General procedures to safeguard independence and objectivity

KPMG LLP is committed to being and being seen to be independent. As part of our ethics and independence policies, all KPMG LLP partners and staff annually confirm their compliance with our ethics and independence policies and procedures including in particular that they have no prohibited shareholdings. Our ethics and independence policies and procedures are fully consistent with the requirements of the FRC Ethical Standard. As a result we have underlying safeguards in place to maintain independence through:

- Instilling professional values
- Communications
- Internal accountability
- Risk management
- Independent reviews.

We are satisfied that our general procedures support our independence and objectivity.

Independence and objectivity considerations relating to other matters

There are no other matters that, in our professional judgment, bear on our independence which need to be disclosed to the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee.

Confirmation of audit independence

We confirm that as of the date of this letter, in our professional judgment, KPMG LLP is independent within the meaning of regulatory and professional requirements and the objectivity of the director and audit staff is not impaired.

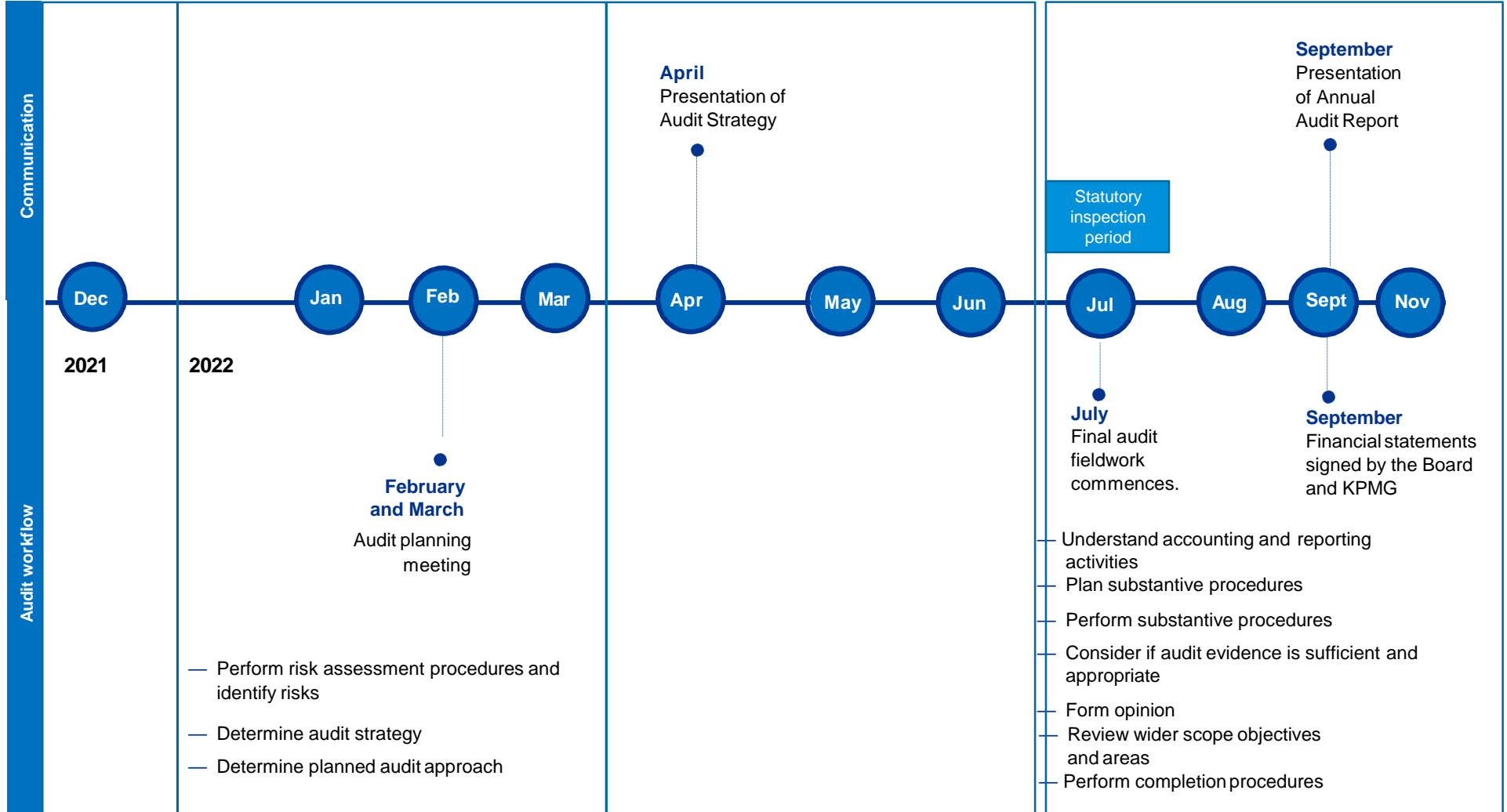
This report is intended solely for the information of the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee of the Board and should not be used for any other purposes.

We would be very happy to discuss the matters identified above (or any other matters relating to our objectivity and independence) should you wish to do so.

Yours faithfully

KPMG LLP

Timeline



Appendix four

Audit outputs

Output	Description	Report date
Audit strategy	Our strategy for the external audit of the Board, including significant risk and audit focus areas.	By 26 April 2022
Independent auditor's report	Our opinion on the Board's financial statements.	By 30 September 2022
Annual audit report	We summarise our findings from our work during the year.	By 30 September 2022
Audit reports on other returns	We will report on the following returns: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Current issues returns— Fraud returns	January, March, July and October 2022 November 2021, February, May and August 2022

Audit Scotland code of audit practice – responsibility of auditors and management

Responsibilities of management

Financial statements

Audited bodies must prepare an annual report and accounts containing financial statements and other related reports. They have responsibility for:

- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of their financial position and their expenditure and income, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and relevant legislation;
- maintaining accounting records and working papers that have been prepared to an acceptable professional standard and that support their financial statements and related reports disclosures;
- ensuring the regularity of transactions, by putting in place systems of internal control to ensure that they are in accordance with the appropriate Council;
- maintaining proper accounting records; and
- preparing and publishing, along with their financial statements, an annual governance statement, management commentary (or equivalent) and a remuneration report that are consistent with the disclosures made in the financial statements. Management commentary should be fair, balanced and understandable and also clearly address the longer- term financial sustainability of the body.

Further, it is the responsibility of management of an audited body, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to communicate relevant information to users about the entity and its financial performance, including providing adequate disclosures in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The relevant information should be communicated clearly and concisely.

Audited bodies are responsible for developing and implementing effective systems of internal control as well as financial, operational and compliance controls. These systems should support the achievement of their objectives and safeguard and secure value for money from the public funds at their disposal. They are also responsible for establishing effective and appropriate internal audit and risk-management functions.

Audited bodies are responsible for providing the auditor with access to all information relevant to the preparation of the financial statements, additional information requested and unrestricted access to persons within the entity.

Prevention and detection of fraud and irregularities

Audited bodies are responsible for establishing arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and irregularities, bribery and corruption and also to ensure that their affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of conduct by putting proper arrangements in place.

Audit Scotland code of audit practice – responsibility of auditors and management

Responsibilities of management
Corporate governance arrangements
Each body, through its chief executive or accountable officer, is responsible for establishing arrangements to ensure the proper conduct of its affairs including the legality of activities and transactions, and for monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements. Audited bodies should involve those charged with governance (including Risk, Audit and Performance Committees or equivalent) in monitoring these arrangements.
Financial position
Audited bodies are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that their financial position is soundly based having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— such financial monitoring and reporting arrangements as maybe specified;— compliance with any statutory financial requirements and achievement of financial targets;— balances and reserves, including strategies about levels and their future use;— how they plan to deal with uncertainty in the medium and longer term; and— the impact of planned future policies and foreseeable developments on their financial position.
Best Value, use of resources and performance
The Scottish Public Finance Manual sets out that accountable officers appointed by the Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration have a specific responsibility to ensure that arrangements have been made to secure bestvalue.

Audit Scotland code of audit practice – responsibility of auditors and management

Responsibilities of auditors

Appointed auditor responsibilities

Auditor responsibilities are derived from statute, this Code, International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland), professional requirements and best practice and cover their responsibilities when auditing financial statements and when discharging their wider scope responsibilities. These are to:

- undertake statutory duties, and comply with professional engagement and ethical standards;
- provide an opinion on audited bodies' financial statements and, where appropriate, the regularity of transactions;
- review and report on, as appropriate, other information such as annual governance statements, management commentaries, remuneration reports, grant claims and whole of government returns;
- notify the Auditor General when circumstances indicate that a statutory report may be required;
- participate in arrangements to cooperate and coordinate with other scrutiny bodies (local government sector only);
- demonstrate compliance with the wider public audit scope by reviewing and providing judgements and conclusions on the audited bodies:
 - effectiveness of performance management arrangements in driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public money and assets;
 - suitability and effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements; and
 - financial position and arrangements for securing financial sustainability.

Weaknesses or risks identified by auditors are only those which have come to their attention during their normal audit work in accordance with the Code, and may not be all that exist. Communication by auditors of matters arising from the audit of the financial statements or of risks or weaknesses does not absolve management from its responsibility to address the issues raised and to maintain an adequate system of control.

This report communicates how we plan to identify, assess and obtain sufficient appropriate evidence regarding the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud and to implement appropriate responses to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

Audit Scotland code of audit practice – responsibility of auditors and management

Responsibilities of auditors
General principles
This Code is designed such that adherence to it will result in an audit that exhibits these principles.
Independent
<p>When undertaking audit work all auditors should be, and should be seen to be, independent. This means auditors should be objective, impartial and comply fully with the Financial Reporting Council's (FRC) ethical standards and any relevant professional or statutory guidance. Auditors will report in public and make recommendations on what they find without being influenced by fear or favour.</p> <p>Our independence confirmation letter (Appendix two) discloses matters relating to our independence and objectivity including any relationships that may bear on the firm's independence and the integrity and objectivity of the audit engagement partner and audit staff.</p> <p>We confirm that, in our professional judgement, KPMG LLP is independent within the meaning of regulatory and professional requirements and that the objectivity of the Director and audit staff is not impaired.</p>
Proportionate and risk based
Audit work should be proportionate and risk based. Auditors need to exercise professional scepticism and demonstrate that they understand the environment in which public policy and services operate. Work undertaken should be tailored to the circumstances of the audit and the audit risks identified. Audit findings and judgements made must be supported by appropriate levels of evidence and explanations. Auditors will draw on public bodies' self-assessment and self-evaluation evidence when assessing and identifying audit risk.
Quality focused
Auditors should ensure that audits are conducted in a manner that will demonstrate that the relevant ethical and professional standards are complied with and that there are appropriate quality-control arrangements in place as required by statute and professional standards.

Appendix five (continued)

Audit Scotland code of audit practice – responsibility of auditors and management

Responsibilities of auditors
Coordinated and integrated
It is important that auditors coordinate their work with internal audit, Audit Scotland, other external auditors and relevant scrutiny bodies to recognise the increasing integration of service delivery and partnership working within the public sector. This would help secure value for money by removing unnecessary duplication and also provide a clear programme of scrutiny activity for audited bodies.
Public focused
The work undertaken by external audit is carried out for the public, including their elected representatives, and in its interest. The use of public money means that public audit must be planned and undertaken from a wider perspective than in the private sector and include aspects of public stewardship and best value. It will also recognise that public bodies may operate and deliver services through partnerships, arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs) or other forms of joint working with other public, private or third sector bodies.
Transparent
Auditors, when planning and reporting their work, should be clear about what, why and how they audit. To support transparency the main audit outputs should be of relevance to the public and focus on the significant issues arising from the audit.
Adds value
It is important that auditors recognise the implications of their audit work, including their wider scope responsibilities, and that they clearly demonstrate that they add value or have an impact in the work that they do. This means that public audit should provide clear judgements and conclusions on how well the audited body has discharged its responsibilities and how well they have demonstrated the effectiveness of their arrangements. Auditors should make appropriate and proportionate recommendations for improvement where significant risks are identified.



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