



Worthing Borough
Council
Audit results report
Year ended 31 March 2022

March 2023



Worthing Borough Council
c/o Worthing Town Hall
Chapel Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 1HA

13 March 2023

Dear Joint Governance Committee Members

2021/22 Audit results report

We are pleased to attach our audit results report, summarising the status of our audit for the forthcoming meeting of the Joint Governance Committee. We will update the Committee at its meeting scheduled for 23 March 2023 on further progress to that date and explain the remaining steps to the issue of our final opinion.

The audit is designed to express an opinion on the 2021/22 financial statements and address current statutory and regulatory requirements. This report contains our findings related to the areas of audit emphasis, our views on Worthing Borough Council's accounting policies and judgements and material internal control findings. Each year sees further enhancements to the level of audit challenge and the quality of evidence required to achieve the robust professional scepticism that society expects. We thank the management team for supporting this process. We have also included an update on our work on value for money arrangements.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Joint Governance Committee, other members of the Council and senior management. It is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss the contents of this report with you at the Joint Governance Committee meeting on 23 March 2023.

Yours faithfully

Helen Thompson

Partner

For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

Encl

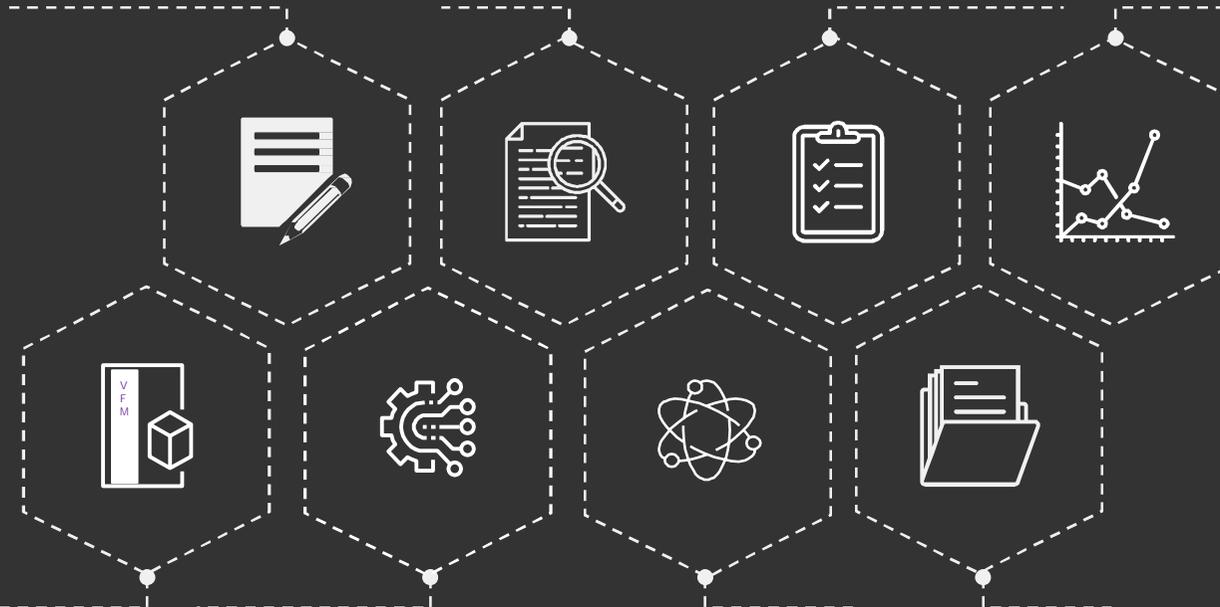
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Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) issued the "Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies". It is available from the PSAA website (<https://www.psa.co.uk/audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities/>). The Statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between appointed auditors and audited bodies. It summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies begin and end, and what is to be expected of the audited body in certain areas.

The "Terms of Appointment and further guidance (updated April 2018)" issued by the PSAA sets out additional requirements that auditors must comply with, over and above those set out in the National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and in legislation, and covers matters of practice and procedure which are of a recurring nature.

This report is made solely to the Joint Governance Committee and management of Worthing Borough Council in accordance with the statement of responsibilities. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Joint Governance Committee, and management of Worthing Borough Council those matters we are required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Joint Governance Committee and management of Worthing Borough Council for this report or for the opinions we have formed. It should not be provided to any third-party without our prior written consent.



01 Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Scope update

In our audit planning report presented to the September 2022 Joint Governance Committee meeting, we provided you with an overview of our audit scope and approach for the audit of the financial statements. We carried out our audit in accordance with this plan.

Status of the audit

Our audit work in respect of the Council opinion is substantially complete. The following items relating to the completion of our audit procedures were outstanding at the date of this report.

- Finalisation of PPE valuations work
- Final review of completed audit procedures
- Receipt and review of the final version of the financial statements
- Update of subsequent events procedures to the date of our opinion
- Receipt and review of the letter of representation

Details of each outstanding item, actions required to resolve and responsibility is included in Appendix B.

Given that the audit process is still ongoing, we will continue to challenge the remaining evidence provided and the final disclosures in the Narrative Report and Accounts which could influence our final audit opinion.

Executive Summary

Auditor responsibilities under the new Code of Audit Practice 2020

Under the Code of Audit Practice 2020 we are required to consider whether the Council has put in place 'proper arrangements' to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness on its use of resources. The 2020 Code requires the auditor to design their work to provide them with sufficient assurance to enable them to report to the Council a commentary against specified reporting criteria (see below) on the arrangements the Council has in place to secure value for money through economic, efficient and effective use of its resources for the relevant period.

The specified reporting criteria are:

- Financial sustainability
How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- Governance
How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness:
How the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

Status of the audit – Value for Money

In the Audit Plan, we reported that our value for money (VFM) risk assessment was in progress but had not identified any risk of significant weakness against the three reporting criteria we are required to consider under the NAO's 2020 Code.

We have since concluded our VFM risk assessment and can confirm that no additional significant weaknesses were identified.

Following completion of the audit of the financial statements, we have revisited our assessment and remain satisfied that we have not identified a risk of significant weakness. As a result, we have completed our planned VFM procedures and have no matters to report by exception in the auditor's report (see Section 03).

Executive Summary

Audit differences

As in previous years we identified a difference between the audited value of the Council's share of pension scheme assets and the estimated value communicated to the Council's actuary earlier in the year to inform its assessment of the Council's pensions liability. This difference, which we consider to be an update to an estimate and not an error, increases the reported pensions liability and debit balance on the negative pensions reserve by £202.2k. This has not been adjusted in the financial statements.

We have identified two items which have been corrected by management:

1. Following the completion of the 2020/21 audit, we agreed with management that they would obtain an updated valuation report from their external valuer to ensure that the valuation date was at 31 March 2022. Previously, the valuation was undertaken as at 1 April, which was a contributory factor to the delay in completing our audit work in the prior year. Management has therefore updated the valuation of investment properties disclosed in the draft financial statements as at 31 March 2022. This has reduced the value of these investment properties by £587k. Similarly, Surplus assets increased in value by £739k.
2. Our PPE valuation testing of Teville Gate identified a difference in judgement between the EY valuation specialist and the Council's specialist valuer which suggests the valuation of the asset is overstated by £1.09m.

We will provide the Joint Governance Committee with a verbal update on any further audit differences on 23 March 2023.

Other reporting issues

We have reviewed the information presented in the Annual Governance Statement for consistency with our knowledge of the Council. We have no matters to report as a result of this work.

We have not yet performed the procedures required by the National Audit Office (NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts submission for 2021/22. However, we do not expect any issues in performing this work as the Council falls below the threshold set within the guidance from HM Treasury and the group audit instructions for 2021/22 on which our work is based.

We have no other matters to report.

Executive Summary

Areas of audit focus

In our Audit Plan, we identified a number of key areas of focus for our audit of the financial report of Worthing Borough Council. This report sets out our observations and status in relation to these areas, including our views on areas which might be conservative and areas where there is potential risk and exposure. Our consideration of these matters and others identified during the period is summarised within the "Areas of Audit Focus" section of this report.

Fraud Risk	Findings & Conclusions
Misstatements due to fraud or error (management override)	We have not identified any evidence that management has overridden controls in order to prepare fraudulent financial statement balances or postings within the financial statements.
Risk of fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, through inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure	<p>We have not identified any evidence of manipulation of expenditure through incorrect capitalisation of revenue expenditure within the Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute balance.</p> <p>We have concluded our work on the testing of additions made to Property, Plant and Equipment during the year and have not identified any evidence of manipulation through incorrect capitalisation of revenue expenditure within the Property, Plant and Equipment additions balance.</p>

Significant Risk	Findings & Conclusions
Valuation of Land and Buildings in Property, Plant & Equipment (PPE) under Existing Use Value (EUUV) or Fair Value (FV) and Assets Held For Sale (AHFS) under Fair Value (FV)	<p>Our testing of Teville Gate identified a difference in judgement between the EY valuation specialist and the Council's specialist valuer which suggests the valuation of the asset is overstated by £1.09m. This has been corrected in the final version of the financial statements.</p> <p>Subject to final review, we have not identified any evidence of material misstatement arising from the valuation of land and buildings under Existing Use Value (EUUV) or Fair Value (FV) and Assets Held For Sale (AHFS) under Fair Value (FV) a depreciated replacement cost basis.</p> <p>In order to prepare the financial statements, the Council used the valuation of surplus assets from 2020/21 in 2021/22, as the 2021/22 balances were not available. The updated valuation has now been obtained and the financial statements updated to reflect the valuation report. Surplus assets increased in value by £739k.</p>
Valuation of Investment Properties (IP) under Fair Value (FV)	<p>In order to prepare the financial statements, the Council used the valuation of investment properties from 2020/21 in 2021/22, as the 2021/22 balances were not available. The updated valuation has now been obtained and the financial statements updated to reflect the valuation report. This reduced the value of these investment properties by £587k.</p> <p>We employed EY Real Estate to review the valuation of 5 investment properties held under fair value. We await their final valuation report.</p> <p>Subject to final review, the detailed testing undertaken by the local audit team did not identify any evidence of material misstatement arising from the valuation of Investment Properties under Fair Value.</p>

Executive Summary

Areas of audit focus

Area of Audit Focus / Inherent Risk	Findings & Conclusions
Valuation of Land & Buildings in property, plant and equipment (PPE) under Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC)	Subject to final review, we have not identified any evidence of material misstatement arising from the valuation of land and buildings under a depreciated replacement cost basis.
Infrastructure assets	Our work concluded the Council's current accounting practice continues to be in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Local Authority Accounting. Where subsequent expenditure is incurred to replace part of an asset, management writes out the value of the old part being replaced.
Pension Liability Valuation	We tested the Council's pension liability valuation and assessed the work of the Council's actuary. We are satisfied that the pension liability and associated balances within the financial statements are not materially misstated. We have undertaken additional audit procedures in responses to the updated ISA540 regarding accounting estimates. These have included the production of a parallel IAS19 report by an EY pensions expert which was then compared to the report prepared by Hymans Robertson. No material differences were identified from this process.
Going Concern Disclosure	We have completed our audit procedures around the going concern disclosure and are satisfied that the Council's use of the going concern assumption is appropriate. We will continue to work with officers to ensure the disclosure is up to date at the point of signing the audit report.

We request that you review these and other matters set out in this report to ensure:

- There are no residual further considerations or matters that could impact these issues
- You concur with the resolution of the issue
- There are no further significant issues you are aware of to be considered before the financial report is finalised

There are no matters, other than those reported by management or disclosed in this report, which we believe should be brought to the attention of the Joint Governance Committee or Management.

Independence

Please refer to Section 07 for our update on Independence.



02 Areas of Audit Focus



Areas of Audit Focus

Significant risk

Misstatements due to fraud or error
(management override)

What is the risk?

The financial statements as a whole are not free of material misstatements whether caused by fraud or error. As identified in ISA (UK) 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. We identify and respond to this fraud risk on every audit engagement.

What did we do?

In response to this risk, we:

- Identified fraud risks during the planning stages.
- Inquired of management about risks of fraud and the controls put in place to address those risks.
- Undertook processes to understand the oversight given by those charged with governance of management's processes over fraud.
- Considered the effectiveness of management's controls designed to address the risk of fraud.
- Determined an appropriate strategy to address those identified risks of fraud.
- Performed mandatory procedures regardless of specifically identified fraud risks, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments in the preparation of the financial statements.

What judgements are we focused on?

We focused on aspects of the financial statements which are open to estimation and judgment, which would facilitate management overriding controls:

- Unusual or unexpected journal entries;
- Material accounting estimates, such as the valuation of land, buildings, council dwellings and investment property and IAS 19 pension balances; and
- Unusual transactions within the financial statements.

What is the status of our work?

Our audit work has not identified any material issues, inappropriate judgements or unusual transactions which indicated that there had been any misreporting of the Council's financial position, or that management had overridden control.

No indication of fraud has been identified.



Areas of Audit Focus

Significant risk

Risk of fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, through inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure *

What is the risk?

Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to improper revenue recognition. In the public sector, this requirement is modified by Practice Note 10 issued by the Financial Reporting Council, which states that auditors should also consider the risk that material misstatements may occur by the manipulation of expenditure recognition.

The Council is under financial pressure to achieve budget and maintain reserve balances above the minimum approved levels. Manipulating expenditure is a key way to achieve these targets.

We believe the risk of manipulation is most likely to manifest in the incorrect capitalisation of revenue expenditure through either inappropriate additions to Property, Plant and Equipment or incorrect classification of expenditure as revenue funded from capital under statute (REFCUS), as there is an incentive to reduce expenditure which is funded from Council Tax.

PPE: Additions totalled £23.9m in the 2021/22 unaudited financial statements.

REFCUS: totalled £2.1m in the 2021/22 unaudited financial statements.

What judgements are we focused on?

We focused on the Council's judgements to classify expenditure as either revenue or capital in nature. We tested a sample of items to confirm that the Council's judgement was supported by sufficient evidence and was genuinely capital in nature.

What did we do?

In response to this risk, we:

- Tested a sample of PPE to ensure that the expenditure incurred and capitalised is clearly capital in nature. We also ensured the transaction was supported by sufficient evidence to verify its value and the period to which it related.
- Tested a sample of REFCUS, to ensure that it is appropriate for the revenue expenditure incurred to be financed from ring fenced capital resources. As with PPE additions, we also ensured these items were supported by sufficient evidence to verify the value and period to which it related.
- Performed a review of significant journals transferring expenditure from revenue to capital codes on the general ledger at the end of the year.

What is the status of our work?

We have concluded our work on the testing of additions made to Property, Plant and Equipment during the year and have not identified any evidence of manipulation through incorrect capitalisation of revenue expenditure within the Property, Plant and Equipment additions balance.

We found no evidence of incorrect capitalisation of revenue expenditure in the REFCUS balance within the financial statements.

We are satisfied that the transactions tested were supported by evidence which confirmed the valuation, nature of the expenditure, period to which it related to and confirmed that it was correctly classified.

We were satisfied that journals posted were appropriate.

We identified no evidence of fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition through the above testing.



Areas of Audit Focus

Significant risk

Valuation of Land and Buildings in Property, Plant & Equipment (PPE) under Existing Use Value (EUV) or Fair Value (FV) and Asset Held For Sale under Fair Value (FV)

What is the risk?

The valuation of land and buildings valued on an EUV/FV basis represent material figures within the Council's financial statements. The valuation of these assets is reliant upon expert valuations based on information provided by the Council, which includes a number of judgements and assumptions.

Errors within the judgements, assumptions or information provided to the valuer can have a material impact on the financial statements.

PPE assets valued on an EUV/FV basis totalled £80.3m in 2021/22 based on the unaudited financial statements.

What judgements are we focused on?

We focused on those assumptions that directly impact the valuation of these assets – such as the yield adopted and forecast future income.

What did we do?

We:

- Considered the work performed by the Council's valuer (Wilks, Head & Eve), and confirmed that the scope of their work is adequate, they had appropriate professional capabilities to complete the work and the results of their work is in line with our expectations.
- Challenged the assumptions used by the Council's valuer by reference to external evidence and our EY valuation specialists. This included considering significant or unusual movements in valuation. Additional work has been completed in this area, including detailed review of a sample of assets by our own valuer.
- Sample tested key asset information used by the valuer in performing their valuation (e.g. yield adopted and forecast future income has been agreed to external sources).
- Confirmed that the valuation was undertaken to ensure all assets required to be valued within a 5 year rolling programme as required by the Code for PPE had been completed, which confirmed that the entire asset base had been revalued by Wilks, Head & Eve in 2021/22, so there was no risk of material misstatement arising from the lack of valuation of assets.
- Confirmed that the valuation was completed on up-to-date information regarding each asset such that any specific changes to assets that have occurred in year had been communicated to the valuer.
- Reviewed and challenged where necessary any changes to useful economic lives as a result of the most recent valuation.
- Tested the accounting entries posted via journal to ensure they have been correctly processed in the financial statements.



Areas of Audit Focus

Significant risk

What is the status of our work?

In order to prepare the financial statements, the Council used the valuation of surplus assets from 2020/21 in 2021/22, as the 2021/22 balances were not available. The updated valuation has now been obtained and the financial statements updated to reflect the valuation report. Surplus assets increased in value by £739k.

The local audit team tested a sample of assets back to supporting information. Our testing of Teville Gate identified a difference in judgement between the EY valuation specialist and the Council's specialist valuer which suggests the valuation of the asset is overstated by £1.09m. This has been corrected in the final version of the financial statements.

We did not identify any other misstatements.

There is no evidence of material misstatement associated with the valuation of land and buildings valued on an Existing Use Value or Fair Value basis, and assets held-for-sale on a Fair Value basis.



Areas of Audit Focus

Significant risk

Valuation of Investment Properties (IP) under Fair Value (FV)

What is the risk?

The valuation of investment properties represent material figures within the Council's financial statements. The valuation of these assets is reliant upon expert valuations based on information provided by the Council, which includes a number of judgements and assumptions.

Errors within the judgements, assumptions or information provided to the valuer can have a material impact on the financial statements.

Investment Property assets valued on an FV basis totalled £76.4m in the 2021/22 unaudited financial statements.

What judgements are we focused on?

We focused on those assumptions that directly impact the valuation of these assets – such as the yield adopted and forecast future income.

What did we do?

We:

- Considered the work performed by the Council's valuer (Wilks, Head & Eve), and confirmed that the scope of their work is adequate, they had appropriate professional capabilities to complete the work and the results of their work is in line with our expectations.
- Challenged the assumptions used by the Council's valuer by reference to external evidence and our EY valuation specialists. This included considering significant or unusual movements in valuation. Additional work has been completed in this area, including detailed review of a sample of assets by our own valuer.
- Sample tested key asset information used by the valuer in performing their valuation (e.g. yield adopted and forecast future income has been agreed to external sources).
- Confirmed that the valuation was undertaken to ensure all investment property had been revalued in year as required by the Code.
- Confirmed that the valuation was completed on up-to-date information regarding each asset such that any specific changes to assets that have occurred in year had been communicated to the valuer.
- Reviewed and challenged where necessary any changes to useful economic lives as a result of the most recent valuation.
- Tested the accounting entries posted via journal to ensure they have been correctly processed in the financial statements.



Areas of Audit Focus

Significant risk

What is our conclusion?

In order to prepare the financial statements, the Council used the valuation of investment properties from 2020/21 in 2021/22, as the 2021/22 balances were not available. The updated valuation has now been obtained and the financial statements updated to reflect the valuation report. This reduced the value of these investment properties by £587k.

We employed EY Real Estate to review the valuation of 5 investment properties held under fair value. We await their final valuation report. Subject to final review, the detailed testing undertaken by the local audit team did not identify any evidence of material misstatement arising from the valuation of Investment Properties under Fair Value.



Areas of Audit Focus

Our response to areas of audit focus



Further details on procedures/work performed

What is the risk / area of focus?	What did we do?
<p>Valuation of land and buildings in property, plant and equipment (PPE) under Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) The value of land and buildings in PPE under DRC represent significant balances in the Council's accounts and are subject to valuation changes and impairment reviews. Management is required to make a lesser degree of material judgemental inputs and apply estimation techniques which are required to calculate these balances held in the balance sheet. Although there is a risk for land and buildings under DRC to be misstated due to the specialised nature of these assets and insufficient availability of market-based evidence to assist the valuation, these assets are inherently not subject to material uncertainty arising due to market conditions.</p> <p>At 31 March 2022, the value of PPE under DRC was £65.2m based on the unaudited financial statements.</p>	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered the work performed by the Council's valuer (Wilks, Head & Eve), and confirmed that the scope of their work is adequate, they had appropriate professional capabilities to complete the work and the results of their work is in line with our expectations. • Challenged the assumptions used by the Council's valuer by reference to external evidence. This included considering significant or unusual movements in valuation. • Sample tested key asset information used by the valuer in performing their valuation (e.g. building areas to support valuations based on price per square metre). • Confirmed that the valuation was undertaken to ensure all assets required to be valued within a 5 year rolling programme as required by the Code for PPE had been completed, which confirmed that the entire asset base had been revalued by Wilks, Head & Eve in 2021/22, so there was no risk of material misstatement arising from the lack of valuation of assets. • Confirmed that as the entire asset base had been revalued, there was no risk that assets not subject to valuation in 2021/22 driving a misstatement. • Reviewed and challenged where necessary any changes to useful economic lives as a result of the most recent valuation. • Tested the accounting entries posted via journal to ensure they have been correctly processed in the financial statements.

What are our findings and conclusions?

Subject to review, no material audit differences have been identified from our work to address this area of focus.



Areas of Audit Focus

Our response to areas of audit focus



Further details on procedures/work performed

What is the risk / area of focus?

Infrastructure Assets

In March 2022, an issue was raised with the National Audit Office's Local Government technical network in relation to the accounting for infrastructure assets. Under the CIPFA Code of Local Authority Accounting, these assets are held at depreciated historic cost. Following more detailed consideration by auditors this year, it has been identified that whilst local authorities add expenditure incurred on replacing or enhancing such assets, most do not appear to be reviewing the Code requirement to establish whether this spend is a replacement of an asset, or a recognised component, and therefore, are not derecognising the old component. As a consequence gross cost/gross accumulation is therefore continually increasing, and the balance sheet may be misstated where the expenditure is a replacement for an asset/component not fully depreciated.

Our work in 2020/21 concluded the Council's current accounting practice is in line with the CIPFA Code. However, as a consequence of the issue above CIPFA is considering a potential Code amendment. We will ensure the Council's accounting treatment of infrastructure assets complies with any updated guidance or Code amendments issued by CIPFA.

What did we do?

We confirmed the Council's accounting practice for infrastructure assets remains in line with the published CIPFA Code of Local Authority Accounting. The Council has therefore not needed to adopt the temporary solution for accounting for infrastructure assets issued by DLUHC and CIPFA. Our work focused on:

- Obtaining evidence to match the subsequent expenditure to the carrying amount of the replaced part or component that is being derecognised.
- Understanding the Councils approach to depreciating infrastructure assets, ensuring that the asset lives were reasonable and undertaking sensitivity analysis to understand the potential impact of over or understating the asset lives.
- Testing the accounting entries have been correctly processed in the financial statements.

What are our findings and conclusions?

Our work concluded the Council's current accounting practice continues to be in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Local Authority Accounting. Where subsequent expenditure is incurred to replace part of an asset, management writes out the value of the old part being replaced.



Areas of Audit Focus

Our response to areas of audit focus



Further details on procedures/work performed

What is the risk / area of focus?

Pension Liability Valuation

The Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice and IAS19 require the Council to make extensive disclosures within its financial statements regarding its membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by West Sussex County Council.

The Council's pension fund liability is a material estimated balance and the Code requires that this liability be disclosed on the Council's balance sheet. At 31 March 2022 this totalled £7.7m.

The information disclosed is based on the IAS 19 report issued to the Council by the actuary.

Accounting for this scheme involves significant estimation and judgement and therefore management engages an actuary to undertake the calculations on their behalf. ISAs (UK) 500 and 540 require us to undertake procedures on the use of management experts and the assumptions underlying fair value estimates.

What did we do?

We:

- Obtained assurances over the information supplied to the actuary in relation to Worthing Borough Council;
- Assessed the work of the Pension Fund actuary including the assumptions they have used by relying on the work of PwC - Consulting Actuaries commissioned by the National Audit Office for all Local Government sector auditors, and considering any relevant reviews by the EY actuarial team;
- Evaluated the reasonableness of the Pension Fund actuary's calculations by comparing them to the outputs of our own auditor's actuarial model; and
- Reviewed and tested the accounting entries and disclosures made within the Council's financial statements in relation to IAS19.

What are our findings and conclusions?

In response to the requirements of ISA540, the auditing standard on accounting estimates, we based our audit approach on procedures to evaluate management's process. The standard requires auditors to test the method of measurement of accounting estimates to determine whether the model is appropriately designed, consistently applied and mathematically accurate, and that the integrity of the assumptions and the data has been maintained in applying the model. Neither we, nor PWC as consulting actuaries commissioned by the NAO for all local government sector audits, are able to access the detailed models of the actuaries in order to evidence these requirements. Therefore, we undertook further procedures to create an auditor's estimate, to gain assurance. We employed the services of an EY Pensions specialist to review the Council's IAS19 reports and run a parallel actuarial model which was compared to that produced by Hymans Robertson. This confirmed there was no material misstatement arising from those estimation procedures undertaken by Hymans Robertson.

We were satisfied there was no evidence of material misstatement arising from the work completed above.

As in previous years we identified a difference between the audited value of the Council's share of pension scheme assets and the estimated value communicated to the Council's actuary earlier in the year to inform its assessment of the Council's pensions liability. This difference, which we consider to be an update to an estimate and not an error, increases the reported pensions liability and debit balance on the negative pensions reserve by £202.2k. This has not been adjusted in the financial statements.



Areas of Audit Focus

Our response to areas of audit focus



Further details on procedures/work performed

What is the risk / area of focus?

Going Concern Disclosure

There is a presumption that the Council will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future. However, the Council is required to carry out a going concern assessment that is proportionate to the risks it faces. In light of the continued impact of Covid-19 during 2021/22, there is a need for the Council to ensure its going concern assessment, including its cashflow forecast, is robust and appropriately comprehensive.

The Council is required to ensure that its going concern disclosure within the statement of accounts adequately reflects its going concern assessment and in particular highlights any uncertainties it has identified.

What did we do?

We:

- Challenged management’s identification of events or conditions impacting going concern.
- Tested management’s resulting assessment of going concern by evaluating supporting evidence (including consideration of the risk of management bias).
- Reviewed the Council’s cashflow forecast covering the foreseeable future, to ensure that it has sufficient liquidity to continue to operate as a going concern including an assessment of any underlying need to borrow.
- Undertook a ‘stand back’ review to consider all of the evidence obtained, whether corroborative or contradictory, when drawing our conclusions on going concern.
- Challenged the disclosure made in the accounts in respect of going concern and any material uncertainties.

What are our findings and conclusions?

We have completed our work relating to going concern and are satisfied the use of the going concern assumption remains appropriate for the Council, and it has access to sufficient working capital to support its operations for a period of at least 12 months from the date of our audit report.

We will continue to work with officers to ensure the disclosure is up to date at the point of signing the audit report.



03 Audit Report



Audit Report

Draft audit report

Our opinion on the financial statements

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WORTHING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Worthing Borough Council (the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2022 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended). The financial statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement; Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement; Balance Sheet; Cash Flow Statement; and the related notes 1 to 40; the Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account and the related notes 1 to 5.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Worthing Borough Council as at 31 March 2022 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those

standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and the Comptroller and Auditor General's AGN01, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Chief Financial Officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts 2021/22, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the other



Audit Report

Draft audit report

Our opinion on the financial statements

information contained within the Statement of Accounts 2021/22.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of the other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- in our opinion the annual governance statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information forthcoming from the audit or our knowledge of the Council
- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)

- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we are not satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Chief Financial Officer's Responsibilities set out on page 33, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022), and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Chief Financial Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Council either intends to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.



Audit Report

Draft audit report

Our opinion on the financial statements

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect irregularities, including fraud. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and management.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Council and determined that the most significant are:

- Local Government Act 1972,
- Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 1992)
- The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended in 2018, 2020, and 2022,
- Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003

- Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/948),
- Business Rate Supplements Act 2009,
- The Local Government Finance Act 2012.
- The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended), and
- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

In addition, the Council has to comply with laws and regulations in the areas of anti-bribery and corruption, data protection, employment legislation, tax legislation, general power of competence, procurement and health and safety.

We understood how Worthing Borough Council is complying with those frameworks by understanding the incentive, opportunities and motives for non-compliance, including inquiring of management, the head of internal audit and those charged with governance and obtaining and reading documentation relating to the procedures in place to identify, evaluate and comply with laws and regulations, and whether they are aware of instances of non-compliance. We corroborated this through our reading of the Council's committee minutes, and through enquiry of employees to confirm Council policies. Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures had a focus on compliance with the accounting framework through obtaining sufficient audit evidence in line with the level of risk identified and with relevant legislation.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Council's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by understanding the potential incentives and pressures for management to manipulate the financial statements, and performed procedures to understand the areas in which this would most likely arise. Based on our risk assessment procedures, we identified misstatements due to fraud or error (management override) and the risk of fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, through inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure to be our fraud risks.



Audit Report

Draft audit report

Our opinion on the financial statements

To address our fraud risk of misstatements due to fraud or error (management override), we tested specific journal entries identified by applying risk criteria to the entire population of journals. For each journal selected, we tested specific transactions back to source documentation to confirm that the journals were authorised and accounted for appropriately. In addition, we assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates were indicative of a potential bias and evaluated the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside of the normal course of business.

To address our fraud risk of inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure we tested the Council's capitalised expenditure to ensure the capitalisation criteria were properly met and the expenditure was genuine.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice 2020, having regard to the guidance on the specified reporting criteria issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in December 2021, as to whether the Council had proper arrangements for financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined these criteria as those necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

Certificate

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have issued our Auditor's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2022. We have completed our work on the value for money arrangements and will report the outcome of our work in our commentary on those arrangements within the Auditor's Annual Report.

Until we have completed these procedures, we are unable to certify that we have completed the audit of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office.



Audit Report

Draft audit report

Our opinion on the financial statements

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Worthing Borough Council, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Council and the Council's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Helen Thompson (Key Audit Partner)
Ernst & Young LLP (Local Auditor)
Southampton
March 2023



04 Audit Differences





Audit Differences

In the normal course of any audit, we identify misstatements between amounts we believe should be recorded in the financial statements and the disclosures and amounts actually recorded. These differences are classified as “known” or “judgemental”. Known differences represent items that can be accurately quantified and relate to a definite set of facts or circumstances. Judgemental differences generally involve estimation and relate to facts or circumstances that are uncertain or open to interpretation.

Summary of adjusted differences

We highlight the following misstatements and adjustments greater than £72.6k which have been corrected by management:

1. Our PPE valuation testing of Teville Gate identified a difference in judgement between the EY valuation specialist and the Councils specialist valuer which suggests the valuation of the asset is overstated by £1.09m.

Uncorrected misstatements are shown on the next slide.

Audit Differences

Summary of unadjusted differences

In addition we highlight the following misstatements to the financial statements and/or disclosures which were not corrected by management. We request that these uncorrected misstatements be corrected or a rationale as to why they are not corrected be considered and approved by the Joint Governance Committee and provided within the Letter of Representation:

Uncorrected misstatements 31 March 2022 (£'000)		Effect on the current period:	 Net assets (Decrease)/Increase			
	OCI Debit/(Credit)	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Debit/(Credit)	Assets current Debit/ (Credit)	Assets non current Debit/ (Credit)	Liabilities current Debit/ (Credit)	Liabilities non- current Debit/ (Credit)
Errors						
Known differences:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council's IAS 19 Pension Liability was understated as balance in financial statements is based upon estimated figures rather than actual. 	202,500					(202,500)
Balance sheet totals	202,500					(202,500)
Cumulative effect of uncorrected misstatements	202,500					(202,500)

There are no amounts that we identified that are individually or in aggregate material to the presentation and disclosures of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022



05

Value for Money



Value for money

The Council's responsibilities for value for money (VFM)

The Council is required to maintain an effective system of internal control that supports the achievement of its policies, aims and objectives while safeguarding and securing value for money from the public funds and other resources at its disposal.

As part of the material published with its financial statements, the Council is required to bring together commentary on its governance framework and how this has operated during the period in a governance statement. In preparing its governance statement, the Council tailors the content to reflect its own individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements set out in the CIPFA code of practice on local authority accounting. This includes a requirement to provide commentary on its arrangements for securing value for money from their use of resources.

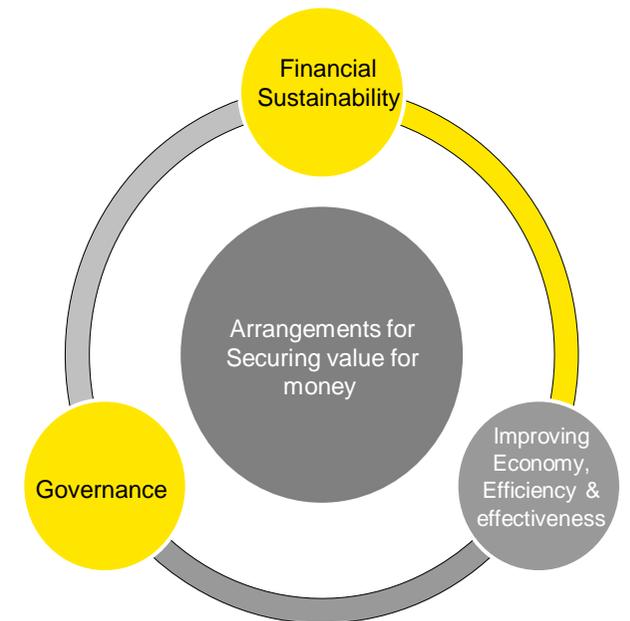
Risk assessment

In the Audit Plan, we reported that our value for money (VFM) risk assessment was in progress but had not identified any risk of significant weakness against the three reporting criteria we are required to consider under the NAO's 2020 Code.

We have since concluded our VFM risk assessment and can confirm that no additional significant weaknesses were identified.

Following completion of the audit of the financial statements, we have revisited our assessment and remain satisfied that we have not identified a risk of significant weakness.

We have completed our planned VFM procedures and have no matters to report by exception in the auditor's report (see Section 03). We plan to issue the VFM commentary by the end of April as part of issuing the Auditor's Annual Report.





06 Other reporting issues

Other reporting issues

Consistency of other information published with the financial statements, including the Annual Governance Statement

We must give an opinion on the consistency of the financial and non-financial information in the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 with the audited financial statements.

Financial information in the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and published with the financial statements was consistent with the audited financial statements.

We must also review the Annual Governance Statement for completeness of disclosures, consistency with other information from our work, and whether it complies with relevant guidance.

We have reviewed the Annual Governance Statement and can confirm it is consistent with other information from our audit of the financial statements and we have no other matters to report.

Whole of Government Accounts

Alongside our work on the financial statements, we also review and report to the National Audit Office on your Whole of Government Accounts return. The extent of our review, and the nature of our report, is specified by the National Audit Office.

We have not yet performed the procedures required on the Whole of Government Accounts submission for 2021/22. However, we do not expect any issues in performing this work as the Council falls below the threshold set within the guidance from HM Treasury and the group audit instructions for 2021/22 on which our work is based.

Other reporting issues

Other powers and duties

We have a duty under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to consider whether to report on any matter that comes to our attention in the course of the audit, either for the Authority to consider it or to bring it to the attention of the public (i.e. “a report in the public interest”). We did not identify any issues which required us to issue a report in the public interest.

Other matters

As required by ISA (UK&I) 260 and other ISAs specifying communication requirements, we must tell you significant findings from the audit and other matters if they are significant to your oversight of the Council’s financial reporting process. They include the following:

- Significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;
- Any significant difficulties encountered during the audit;
- Any significant matters arising from the audit that were discussed with management;
- Written representations we have requested;
- Expected modifications to the audit report;
- Any other matters significant to overseeing the financial reporting process;
- Related parties;
- External confirmations;
- Going concern; and
- Consideration of laws and regulations.

We have no matters to report.



07

Independence

Relationships, services and related threats and safeguards

The FRC Ethical Standard requires that we provide details of all relationships between Ernst & Young (EY) and the Council, and its members and senior management and its affiliates, including all services provided by us and our network to the Council, its members and senior management and its affiliates, and other services provided to other known connected parties that we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on the our integrity or objectivity, including those that could compromise independence and the related safeguards that are in place and why they address the threats.

There are no relationships from 1 April 2021 to the date of this report, which we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence and objectivity.

Services provided by Ernst & Young

The next page includes a summary of the fees due for the year ended 31 March 2022 in line with the disclosures set out in FRC Ethical Standard and in statute. Full details of the services that we have provided are shown below.

As at the date of this report, there are no future services which have been contracted and no written proposal to provide non-audit services has been submitted. We confirm that we have not undertaken non-audit work other than the certification of the Council's Housing Benefit Claim.

EY Transparency Report 2022

Ernst & Young (EY) has policies and procedures that instil professional values as part of firm culture and ensure that the highest standards of objectivity, independence and integrity are maintained. Details of the key policies and processes in place within EY for maintaining objectivity and independence can be found in our annual Transparency Report which the firm is required to publish by law. The most recent version of this Report is for the year end 30 June 2022:

[EY UK 2022 Transparency Report | EY UK](#)

Relationships, services and related threats and safeguards

Services provided by Ernst & Young

Description	Planned Fee 2021/22 £	Scale Fee 2021/22 £	Final Fee 2020/21 £
PSAA Scale Fee	36,311	36,311	36,311
Total agreed fees:			
PSAA expected additional minimal core fees (Note 1):			
• VFM	TBC	6,000	6,071
• ISA 540 accounting estimates		2,500	2,541
2020/21 scale fee variation determined by PSAA excl VFM / ISA 540 (Note 2)	N/A	N/A	39,941
2021/22 fee variation (Note 3)	TBC	TBC	N/A
Total Proposed Fees	TBC	TBC	84,864
Housing Benefit Claim Certification Fees	TBC	TBC	27,510

We have updated the table above to reflect the actual scale fee variation determined by the PSAA for 2020/21.

(1) In August 2021, PSAA published 'Additional information for 2020/21 audit fees'. PSAA commissioned external independent technical research for setting standardised fee variations to assess the expected impact on audit work programmes of a range of new and updated audit requirements. In the absence of alternate information, we have included the same minimum fees in 2021/22.

(2) In June 2022, PSAA determined the additional fee for reoccurring relating to changes in the scope of auditor work excluding VFM and ISA540.

(3) The additional fee for 2021/22 and any other specific costs incurred will be discussed with officers before being put forward for PSAA approval, following the completion of our audit.



08 Appendices

Appendix A

Required communications with the Joint Governance Committee

There are certain communications that we must provide to the those charged with governance of UK entities. We have detailed these here together with a reference of when and where they were covered:

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	  When and where
Terms of engagement	Confirmation by the Joint Governance Committee of acceptance of terms of engagement as written in the engagement letter signed by both parties.	The statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies.
Our responsibilities	Reminder of our responsibilities as set out in the engagement letter.	Audit planning report – September 2022 Joint Governance Committee.
Planning and audit approach	Communication of the planned scope and timing of the audit, any limitations and the significant risks identified. When communicating key audit matters this includes the most significant risks of material misstatement (whether or not due to fraud) including those that have the greatest effect on the overall audit strategy, the allocation of resources in the audit and directing the efforts of the engagement team.	Audit planning report – September 2022 Joint Governance Committee.
Significant findings from the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures • Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit • Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management • Written representations that we are seeking • Expected modifications to the audit report • Other matters if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.

Appendix A

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	 When and where
Going concern	<p>Events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity’s ability to continue as a going concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty related to going concern • Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements • The appropriateness of related disclosures in the financial statements 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Misstatements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion, unless prohibited by law or regulation • The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods • A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected • Material misstatements corrected by management 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Subsequent events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiry of the Joint Governance Committee where appropriate regarding whether any subsequent events have occurred that might affect the financial statements. 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.

Appendix A

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	  When and where
Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries of the Joint Governance Committee to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity • Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that a fraud may exist • Unless all of those charged with governance are involved in managing the entity, any identified or suspected fraud involving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management; b. Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or c. Others where the fraud results in a material misstatement in the financial statements. • The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures necessary to complete the audit when fraud involving management is suspected • Any other matters related to fraud, relevant to Joint Governance Committee responsibility. 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Related parties	<p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity’s related parties including, when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-disclosure by management • Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions • Disagreement over disclosures • Non-compliance with laws and regulations • Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Independence	<p>Communication of all significant facts and matters that bear on EY’s, and all individuals involved in the audit, objectivity and independence.</p> <p>Communication of key elements of the audit engagement partner’s consideration of independence and objectivity such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal threats • Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness • An overall assessment of threats and safeguards • Information about the general policies and process within the firm to maintain objectivity and independence 	Audit Planning Report – September 2022 and Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.

Appendix A

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	  When and where
	<p>Communications whenever significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place.</p> <p>For public interest entities and listed companies, communication of minimum requirements as detailed in the FRC Revised Ethical Standard 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships between EY, the company and senior management, its affiliates and its connected parties • Services provided by EY that may reasonably bear on the auditors' objectivity and independence • Related safeguards • Fees charged by EY analysed into appropriate categories such as statutory audit fees, tax advisory fees, other non-audit service fees • A statement of compliance with the Ethical Standard, including any non-EY firms or external experts used in the audit • Details of any inconsistencies between the Ethical Standard and Group's policy for the provision of non-audit services, and any apparent breach of that policy • Where EY has determined it is appropriate to apply more restrictive rules than permitted under the Ethical Standard • The Joint Governance Committee should also be provided an opportunity to discuss matters affecting auditor independence 	
External confirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management's refusal for us to request confirmations • Inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures. 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Consideration of laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to compliance with applicable regulations, matters involving identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, other than those which are clearly inconsequential and the implications thereof. Instances of suspected non-compliance may also include those that are brought to our attention that are expected to occur imminently or for which there is reason to believe that they may occur • Enquiry of the Joint Governance Committee into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that the Joint Governance Committee may be aware of 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.

Appendix A

		 Our Reporting to you
Required communications	 What is reported?	 When and where
Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit. 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.
Auditors report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key audit matters that we will include in our auditor’s report Any circumstances identified that affect the form and content of our auditor’s report 	Audit Results Report – March 2023 Joint Governance Committee.

Appendix B

Outstanding matters

The following items relating to the completion of our audit procedures are outstanding at the date of the release of this report:

Item 	Actions to resolve 	Responsibility 
Valuation of Land and Buildings	EY and management / specialist to agree revised valuation for Worthing Civic Centre	EY, management and specialist.
Final review of completed audit procedures	EY to complete	EY
Receipt and review of the final version of the financial statements	Council to prepare final version of accounts	Management and EY
Update of subsequent events procedures to the date of our opinion	EY to complete at point of signing	EY
Receipt and review of the letter of representation	Council to prepare letter on headed paper	Management and EY

Until all our audit procedures are complete, we cannot confirm the final form of our audit opinion as new issues may emerge or we may not agree on final detailed disclosures in the Annual Report. At this point no issues have emerged that would cause us to modify our opinion. A draft of the current opinion is included in Section 03.

Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

[To be prepared on the entity's letterhead]

[Date]

Ernst & Young

[Address]

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Worthing Borough Council ("the Council") for the year ended 31 March 2022. We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Council financial position of Worthing Borough Council as of 31 March 2022 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), which involves an examination of the accounting system, internal control and related data to the extent you considered necessary in the circumstances, and is not designed to identify - nor necessarily be expected to disclose - all fraud, shortages, errors and other irregularities, should any exist.

Accordingly, we make the following representations, which are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

A. Financial Statements and Financial Records

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, under the relevant statutory authorities, for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

2. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Council, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the financial statements referred to above give a true and fair view of the financial position, financial performance (or results of operations) and cash flows of the Council in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the financial statements.

3. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.

4. As members of management of the Council, we believe that the Council has a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. We have disclosed to you any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that we have made to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our system of internal controls. and the effects of the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus on our system of internal controls.

5. We believe that the effects of any unadjusted audit differences, summarised in the accompanying schedule, accumulated by you during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole. We have not corrected these differences identified by and brought to the attention from the auditor because [specify reasons for not correcting misstatement].

We do not agree that items [specify items in question] constitute differences because [specify reasons for disagreement].

6. We confirm the Council does not have securities (debt or equity) listed on a recognized exchange.

Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

B. Non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible to determine that the Council's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible to identify and address any non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

2. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.

3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

4. We have no knowledge of any identified or suspected non-compliance with laws or regulations, including fraud that may have affected the Council (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers"), including non-compliance matters:

- involving financial improprieties;
- related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Council's financial statements;
- related to laws and regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the Council's activities, its ability to continue to operate, or to avoid material penalties;
- involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal controls, or others; or
- in relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other non-compliance with laws and regulations communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

C. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions

1. We have provided you with:

- Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;

- Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and

- Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and all material transactions, events and conditions are reflected in the financial statements, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic and including those related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Council and Joint Governance Committee (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the period to the most recent meeting on the following date: TBC.

4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the period end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.

5. We believe that the methods, significant assumptions and the data we used in making accounting estimates and related disclosures are appropriate and consistently applied to achieve recognition, measurement and disclosure that is in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

6. We have disclosed to you, and the Council has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.

Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

7. From the date of our last management representation letter or the beginning of the current period for initial audits through the date of this letter we have disclosed to you, to the extent that we are aware, any (1) unauthorized access to our information technology systems that either occurred or to the best of our knowledge is reasonably likely to have occurred based on our investigation, including of reports submitted to us by third parties (including regulatory agencies, law enforcement agencies and security consultants), to the extent that such unauthorized access to our information technology systems is reasonably likely to have a material impact to the financial statements, in each case or in the aggregate, and (2) ransomware attacks when we paid or are contemplating paying a ransom, regardless of the amount

D. Liabilities and Contingencies

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to you and are appropriately reflected in the financial statements.
2. We have informed you of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.
3. We have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related to litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

E. Going Concern

1. Note 3 to the financial statements discloses all the matters of which we are aware that are relevant to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, our plans for future action, and the feasibility of those plans.

F. Subsequent Events

1. There have been no events, including events related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and including events related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus, subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

G. Other information

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information. The other information comprises the Narrative Report and Annual Governance Statement.
2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

H. Climate-related matters

1. We confirm that to the best of our knowledge all information that is relevant to the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of climate-related matters has been considered.
2. The key assumptions used in preparing the financial statements are, to the extent allowable under the requirements of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, aligned with the statements we have made in the other information or other public communications made by us.

Ownership of Assets

1. Except for assets capitalised under finance leases, the Council has satisfactory title to all assets appearing in the Balance Sheet, and there are no liens or encumbrances on the Council's assets, nor has any asset been pledged as collateral. All assets to which the Council has satisfactory title appear in the Balance Sheet.
2. All agreements and options to buy back assets previously sold have been properly recorded and adequately disclosed in the financial statements.

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3. We have no plans to abandon lines of product or other plans or intentions that will result in any excess or obsolete inventory, and no inventory is stated at an amount in excess of net realisable value.
4. There are no formal or informal compensating balance arrangements with any of our cash and investment accounts.

Reserves

1. We have properly recorded or disclosed in the financial statements the useable and unusable reserves.

Contingent Liabilities

We are unaware of any violations or possible violations of laws or regulations the effects of which should be considered for disclosure in the financial statements or as the basis of recording a contingent loss (other than those disclosed or accrued in the financial statements).

We are unaware of any known or probable instances of non-compliance with the requirements of regulatory or governmental authorities, including their financial reporting requirements, and there have been no communications from regulatory agencies or government representatives concerning investigations or allegations of non-compliance, except as follows:

- Matters of routine, normal, recurring nature (e.g., examinations by bank and insurance examiners, examinations by taxing authorities) none of which involves any allegations of noncompliance with laws or regulations that should be considered for disclosure in the financial statements or as a basis for recording a loss contingency.

Use of the Work of a Specialist

When the Council has used the work of a specialist, we may include the following representation:

1. We agree with the findings of the specialists that we engaged to evaluate the valuation of land and buildings and have adequately considered

the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the financial statements and the underlying accounting records. We did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and we are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.

Estimates

Valuation of Land and Buildings and Investment Properties Estimate

1. We confirm that the significant judgments made in making the valuation of land and buildings and investment properties estimate have taken into account all relevant information and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic of which we are aware.
2. We believe that the selection or application of the methods, assumptions and data used by us have been consistently and appropriately applied or used in making the valuation of land and buildings and investment properties estimate.
3. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of land and buildings, investment properties and council dwellings estimate appropriately reflect our intent and ability to provide an accurate valuation of the Council's land, buildings and investment properties on behalf of the entity.
4. We confirm that the disclosures made in the Council financial statements with respect to the accounting estimates, including those describing estimation uncertainty and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, are complete and are reasonable in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
5. We confirm that appropriate specialized skills or expertise has been applied in making the valuation of land and buildings and investment properties estimate.
6. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimates and disclosures in the consolidated and parent entity financial statements, including due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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IAS 19 Pensions Liability Estimate

1. We confirm that the significant judgments made in making the IAS 19 pensions liability estimate have taken into account all relevant information and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic of which we are aware.
2. We believe that the selection or application of the methods, assumptions and data used by us have been consistently and appropriately applied or used in making the IAS 19 pensions liability estimate.
3. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the IAS 19 pensions liability estimate appropriately reflect our intent and ability to provide an accurate valuation of the Council's pensions liability on behalf of the entity.
4. We confirm that the disclosures made in the Councils financial statements with respect to the accounting estimates, including those describing estimation uncertainty and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, are complete and are reasonable in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
5. We confirm that appropriate specialized skills or expertise has been applied in making the IAS 19 Pensions Liability estimate.
6. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimates and disclosures in the financial statements, including due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Retirement benefits

1. On the basis of the process established by us and having made appropriate enquiries, we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the scheme liabilities are consistent with our knowledge of the business. All significant retirement benefits and all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for.

Yours faithfully,

(Chief Financial Officer)

(Chair of the Joint Governance Committee)

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