



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales

# 2018 Audit Plan – Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund

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This document was produced by Richard Harries. Mike Jones and Helen Williams.

**2018 Audit Plan**

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## Summary

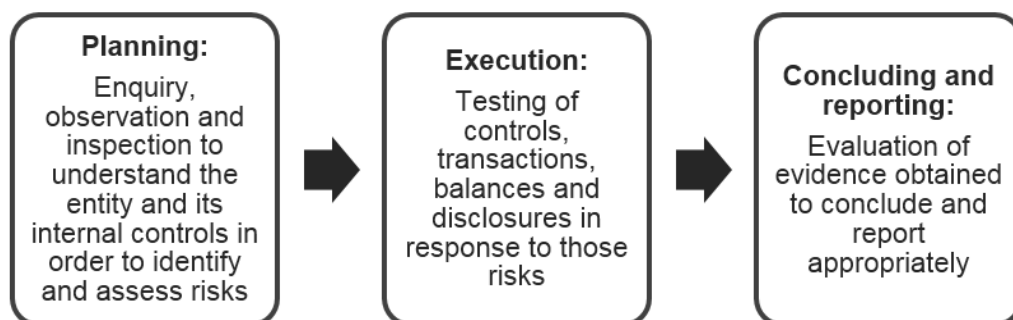
- 1 As your external auditor, my objective is to carry out an audit which discharges my statutory duties as Auditor General and fulfils my obligations under the Code of Audit Practice to examine and certify whether Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund (the Pension Fund) financial statements are 'true and fair'.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

## Audit of the Pension Fund financial statements

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

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

### Exhibit 1: my audit approach



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

**Exhibit 2: risks of material misstatement**

Risks of material misstatement	Proposed audit response
<p>The risk of <b>management override</b> of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk.</p>	<p>My audit team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• test the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements;</li> <li>• review accounting estimates for biases; and</li> <li>• evaluate the rationale for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business.</li> </ul>
<p>Investment managers are appointed to manage the investment portfolio. Their own systems and records, together with the custodian's bank account information, will generate account entries made to the Pension Fund account and net assets statement.</p>	<p>My audit team will obtain direct confirmation from the fund managers of year-end investment balances, and consider whether investment managers' internal control reports indicate specific risk to these balances. My audit team will also test the integrity of the fund managers' reports.</p>
<p>The eight Pension Funds in Wales have created an 'all-Wales' pooled investment vehicle which will be overseen and reported on by a joint governance committee. An inter-authority agreement has been signed by the Welsh Pension Funds and the joint committee will be producing financial statements for the 2017-18 financial year. However no investments will be transferred to this new management arrangement until after 1 April 2018.</p> <p>Separate financial statements will need to be prepared for the joint committee which for 2017-18 are only expected to include administration costs of setting up the joint committee. However, individual Pension Funds will need to consider recognising a share of the 2017-18 joint committee financial statements in their financial statements.</p>	<p>My audit team will review progress on this arrangement and consider if there is an impact on the 2017-18 financial statements and what additional disclosures are required.</p>

Risks of material misstatement	Proposed audit response
<p>The Pension Fund was subject to a full <b>actuarial valuation</b> as at 31 March 2016. The new contribution rates come into effect on 1 April 2017. There is a risk that these new contribution rates are not fairly reflected in the Pension Fund's financial statements.</p>	<p>My audit team will check that the revised contribution rates have been correctly applied to the relevant bodies in the 2017-18 financial statements.</p>
<p>There are transfers in and out of the Pension Fund that are currently under review by the Actuary, and have been for a number of years.</p> <p>There is a risk that these transfers have not been accounted for in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice.</p>	<p>We will confirm the financial impact (if any) of these transfers for the 2017-18 financial year, and confirm compliance with the Code of Practice.</p>

- 8 I do not seek to obtain absolute assurance that the Pension Fund financial statements are true and fair, but adopt a concept of materiality. My aim is to identify material misstatements, that is, those that might result in a reader of the financial statements being misled. The levels at which I judge such misstatements to be material will be reported to the Audit Committee and to those charged with governance for Rhondda Cynon Taf (the Council), as the administering authority of the Pension Fund as a whole, prior to completion of the audit.
- 9 For reporting purposes, I will treat any misstatements below a trivial level (set at 5% of materiality as not requiring consideration by those charged with governance and therefore I will not report them.
- 10 My fees are based on the following assumptions:
- information provided to support the financial statements is timely, to the quality expected and has been subject to quality assurance review;
  - appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided to enable my audit team to deliver my audit in an efficient manner;
  - all appropriate officials will be available during the audit;
  - you have all the necessary controls and checks in place to enable the Responsible Financial Officer to provide all the assurances that I require in the Letter of Representation addressed to me.

## Statutory audit functions

- 11 In addition to the audit of the financial statements, I have statutory responsibilities to receive questions and objections to the accounts from local electors. These responsibilities are set out in the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004:
- Section 30 Inspection of documents and questions at audit; and
  - Section 31 Right to make objections at audit.

- 12 Audit fees will be chargeable for work undertaken in dealing with electors' questions and objections. Because audit work will depend upon the number and nature of any questions and objections, it is not possible to estimate an audit fee for this work.
- 13 If I do receive questions or objections, I will discuss potential audit fees at the time.

## Fee, audit team and timetable

### Fee

- 14 Your estimated fee for 2018 is set out in [Exhibit 3](#), and is the same as the fee set out in the 2017 audit plan.
- 15 As per our approved Fee Scheme for 2018-19, a small increase has been applied to my fee rates (less than one per cent) which we have looked to offset by a reduction in audit days and skill mix.

#### Exhibit 3: audit fee

Audit area	Proposed fee for 2018 (£)	Actual fee for 2017 (£)
Audit of pension fund accounts	39,385	39,385

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

### Audit team

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

#### Exhibit 4: my team

Name	Role	Contact number	E-mail address
Richard Harries	Engagement Lead – Financial Audit	02920 320500	<a href="mailto:richard.harries@audit.wales">richard.harries@audit.wales</a>
Mike Jones	Financial Audit Manager	02920 320500	<a href="mailto:mike.jones@audit.wales">mike.jones@audit.wales</a>

Name	Role	Contact number	E-mail address
Helen Williams	Financial Audit Team Leader	01443 680605	<a href="mailto:helen.williams@audit.wales">helen.williams@audit.wales</a>

19 I can confirm that my team members are all independent of the Pension Fund and its officers. In addition, I am not aware of any potential conflicts of interest that I need to bring to your attention.

## Timetable

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

### Exhibit 5: timetable

Planned output	Work undertaken	Report finalised
<b>2018 Audit Plan</b>	December 2017 to February 2018	April 2018
<b>Financial accounts work:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit of Financial Statements Report</li> <li>Opinion on Financial Statements</li> <li>Financial Accounts Memorandum</li> </ul>	February to August 2018	August 2018  September 2018 October 2018
<b>2019 Audit Plan</b>	October to December 2018	January 2019



## Respective responsibilities

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

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

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

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

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

Management agrees to provide me with:

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

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

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

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

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

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

## Good Practice Exchange

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

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



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