

The Audit Findings for Borough of Poole

Year ended 31 March 2019

25 July 2019



Contents



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Section

1. Headlines
2. Financial statements
3. Value for money
4. Independence and ethics

Page

- 3-4
5-17
18-20
21

Appendices

- A. Follow up of prior year recommendations
- B. Audit adjustments
- C. Fees
- D. Audit Opinion

The contents of this report relate only to those matters which came to our attention during the conduct of our normal audit procedures which are designed for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements. Our audit is not designed to test all internal controls or identify all areas of control weakness. However, where, as part of our testing, we identify control weaknesses, we will report these to you. In consequence, our work cannot be relied upon to disclose all defalcations or other irregularities, or to include all possible improvements in internal control that a more extensive special examination might identify. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

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Headlines

This table summarises the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of Borough of Poole ('the Council') and the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 for those charged with governance.

Financial Statements	<p>Under International Standards of Audit (UK) (ISAs) and the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to report whether, in our opinion, the group and Council's financial statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• give a true and fair view of the financial position of the group and Council and the group and Council's income and expenditure for the year; and• have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting and prepared in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. <p>We are also required to report whether other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.</p>	<p>Our audit work was completed on site during June/July. Our findings are summarised on pages 5 to 17. We have identified one adjustment to the financial statements which resulted in an adjustment being required to the Authority's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This related to the McCloud judgement in respect of the pension liability. See Appendix B. In addition to adjusting the balance sheet, the Authority has treated this as an adjustment through Other Comprehensive Income rather than through service costs. We consider this treatment to be incorrect and have included this as an unadjusted error in Appendix B. There is no overall impact on the general fund and the pension liability is correctly stated.</p> <p>Our follow up of recommendations from the prior year's audit are detailed in Appendix A.</p> <p>Our work is substantially complete and there are no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinion Appendix D or material changes to the financial statements, subject to the following outstanding matters;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- completion of testing of operating expenses, fees and charges, debtors and creditors and grants;- completion of testing of property valuations;- related parties;- group consolidation procedures;- testing of payroll transactions for schools payrolls administered by Dorset County Council;- awaiting confirmation of responses to be received from the auditor of the Dorset Pension Fund;- receipt of management representation letter; and- review of the final set of financial statements. <p>We have concluded that the other information to be published with the financial statements is consistent with our knowledge of your organisation and the financial statements we have audited.</p> <p>Our anticipated audit report opinion will be unqualified including an Emphasis of Matter paragraph reflecting that the Council has demised with services passing to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.</p>
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Headlines

This table summarises the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of Borough of Poole ('the Council') and the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 for those charged with governance.

Value for Money arrangements

Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to report if, in our opinion, the Council has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources ('the value for money (VFM) conclusion').

We have completed our risk based review of the Council's value for money arrangements. We have concluded that Borough of Poole has proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We therefore anticipate issuing an unqualified 'value for money conclusion, as detailed in Appendix D. Our findings are summarised on pages 18 to 20.

Statutory duties

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ('the Act') also requires us to:

- report to you if we have applied any of the additional powers and duties ascribed to us under the Act; and
- To certify the closure of the audit.

We have not exercised any of our additional statutory powers or duties

We have completed the majority of work under the Code and expect to be able to certify the completion of the audit when we give our audit opinion.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance provided by the finance team and other staff during our audit.

Summary

Overview of the scope of our audit

This Audit Findings Report presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 and the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'). Its contents have been discussed with management.

As auditors we are responsible for performing the audit, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements.

Audit approach

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the group's business and is risk based, and in particular included:

- an evaluation of the components of the group based on a measure of materiality considering each as a percentage of total group assets and revenues to assess the significance of the component and to determine the planned audit response. From this evaluation we determined that an analytical audit response was required for Tricuro Ltd and a targeted approach for Poole Housing Partnership Ltd, focussing on the pensions liability figure.

- an evaluation of the group's internal controls environment including its IT systems and controls; and
- substantive testing on significant transactions and material account balances, including the procedures outlined in this report in relation to the key audit risks.

We have not had to alter or change our audit plan, as communicated to you on 15 January 2019 and included on this agenda.

Conclusion

We have substantially completed our audit of your financial statements and subject to outstanding queries being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion by 31 July 2019, as detailed in Appendix D. These outstanding items include:

- completion of testing of operating expenses, fees and charges, debtors and creditors and grants;
- completion of testing of property valuations;
- related parties;
- group consolidation procedures;
- testing of payroll transactions for schools payrolls administered by Dorset County Council;
- awaiting confirmation of responses to be received from the auditor of the Dorset Pension Fund;
- receipt of management representation letter; and
- review of the final set of financial statements.
- .

Summary - Materiality

Our approach to materiality

The concept of materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to the monetary misstatements but also to disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.

Materiality calculations at the planning stage were based on prior year expenditure. Gross expenditure has reduced in 2018/19 and our materiality calculations have been adjusted. We detail in the table below our assessment of materiality for Borough of Poole, including a separate materiality for the group financial statements.

	Group Amount (£)	Council Amount (£)
Materiality for the financial statements	5.7 million	5.5 million
Performance materiality	4.125 million	4.275 million
Trivial matters	285,000	275,000

Significant audit risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Commentary

1

Improper revenue recognition

Under ISA 240 (UK) there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.

Auditor commentary

Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at the Council, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted, because:

- there is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition;
- opportunities to manipulate revenue recognition are very limited;
- the culture and ethical frameworks of local authorities, including Borough of Poole, mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable.

Therefore we do not consider this to be a significant risk for Borough of Poole.

2

Management override of controls

Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities. The Council faces external scrutiny of its spending, and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance. We identified management override of controls as a risk requiring special audit consideration.

Auditor commentary

We carried the following audit procedures in response to this risk:

- review of accounting estimates, judgements and decisions made by management;
- testing of journal entries;
- review of unusual significant transactions;
- review of significant related party transactions outside the normal course of business.

Our audit work has not identified any evidence of management over-ride of controls.

We set out later in this section of the report our work and findings on accounting estimates and judgements.

Significant audit risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Commentary

3

Valuation of property, plant and equipment

The Code requires that where assets are subject to revaluation, their year end carrying value should reflect the appropriate current value at that date. This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£661.983) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions

The Authority's policy is to revalue its land and buildings on a five year rolling basis and engages two external valuation firms to complete this work overseen by the Authority's property services department. The valuation is carried out at the 31 December with any significant changes between this date and the year end being reflected in the final valuation reports received.

The Authority's property services department also undertakes a review of assets not revalued in the year to inform valuation decisions and to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different from the current value and to inform valuation decisions. Council dwellings are valued annually at 31 March to ensure that the carrying value of dwellings on the balance sheet reflects the current value.

This represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements. We identified the valuation of land and buildings revaluations as a risk requiring special audit consideration.

Auditor commentary

We carried the following audit procedures in response to this risk:

- review of management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate;
- review of the competence, expertise and objectivity of management experts used;
- review of the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work;
- discussions with the valuers about the basis on which the valuation was carried out, challenging the key assumptions;
- review and challenge of the information used by the valuer to ensure it was robust and consistent with our understanding;
- sample testing of beacon properties in the HRA;
- testing of revaluations made during the year to ensure they were input correctly into the Council's asset register;
- evaluation of the assumptions made by management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management satisfied themselves that these were not materially different from current value.

We have challenged the Authority's property services department and their assessment of changes in asset values during the year.

We have obtained independent sources of evidence from Gerald Eve as auditors expert to challenge the valuation of assets and conclude that the carrying value of assets at the year end is not materially different from the current value.

We are currently finalising our work in this area.

Significant audit risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Commentary

4

Valuation of pension fund net liability

The Council's pension fund asset and liability as reflected in its balance sheet represent a significant estimate in the financial statements.

We identified the valuation of the pension fund net liability as a risk requiring special audit consideration.

The pensions liability figure for Poole Housing Partnership is a material figure in the accounts. Our work in this area included this balance.

Auditor commentary

We carried the following audit procedures in response to this risk:

- identified the controls put in place by management to ensure that the pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and assessed whether those controls were implemented as expected and whether they were sufficient to mitigate the risk of material misstatement;
- Review of the scope of the actuary's work;
- review of the competence, expertise and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Council's pension fund valuation;
- gaining an understanding of the basis on which the IAS 19 valuation was carried out, undertaking procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made;
- review of the consistency of the pension fund net liability disclosures in notes to the financial statements with the actuarial report from your actuary.
- reviewed if there are any departures from the actuary's recommended assumptions – none noted;
- reviewed the duration of liabilities of the Council to ensure assumptions used are appropriate to the asset and liability profile of the authority

We have compared the actuary's assumptions to the report provided by the auditor's expert PwC.

We have obtained confirmation from the auditor of the Dorset Pension Fund over controls of the accuracy and completeness of source data provided to the actuary and of the controls in place to ensure that member data is correct. This remains outstanding.



We have reviewed the actual contributions and benefits paid compared with the estimated data used by the actuary to ensure the estimates are reasonable.

Our audit work has not identified any issues in respect of the valuation of the pension fund net liability.





Significant findings - other issues

Issue	Commentary	Auditor view
<p>Potential impact of the McCloud judgement</p> <p>The Court of Appeal has ruled that there was age discrimination in the judges and firefighters pension schemes where transitional protections were given to scheme members.</p> <p>The Government applied to the Supreme Court for permission to appeal this ruling, but this permission to appeal was unsuccessful. The case will now be remitted back to employment tribunal for remedy.</p> <p>The legal ruling around age discrimination (McCloud - Court of Appeal) has implications not just for pension funds, but also for other pension schemes where they have implemented transitional arrangements on changing benefits.</p>	<p>Discussion is ongoing in the sector regarding the potential impact of the ruling on the financial statements of Local Government bodies.</p> <p>The Authority requested an estimate from its actuary of the potential impact of the McCloud ruling. The actuary's estimate was of a possible increase in pension liabilities of £5,109k, and an increase to the with a corresponding entry to with a corresponding entry impacting on past and current service costs.</p> <p>The Group accounts of Borough of Poole include the pension liability of Poole Housing Partnership Ltd (PHP), the arms length management organisation that manages the council housing stock for the Authority. The additional liability relating to PHP impacting the group accounts is £156k.</p> <p>Although management's view is that the impact of the ruling is not material for Borough of Poole, management has determined that an adjustment should be made to the financial statements to reflect the most complete position. This has been adjusted through Other Comprehensive Income rather than through service costs, which we consider to be the correct treatment. There is no overall impact on the general fund and the pension liability is correctly stated</p>	<p>We have reviewed the analysis performed by the actuary, and consider that the approach that has been taken to arrive at this estimate is reasonable.</p> <p>In our view there is sufficient evidence to indicate that a liability is probable, and we concur with managements decision to amend the financial statements. We also acknowledge the significant uncertainties relating to the estimation of the impact on the Authority's liability.</p> <p>We have included this as an adjusted misstatement within Appendix B.</p> <p>We have also included an unadjusted misstatement in respect of the treatment of the service costs element within Appendix B.</p>


Significant findings – key judgements and estimates

Accounting area	Summary of management's policy	Audit Comments	Assessment
Provisions for NNDR appeals - £5.7m	The Council is responsible for repaying a proportion of successful rateable value appeals. successful rateable value appeals. Management calculates the level of provision required and is based upon the latest information about outstanding rates appeals provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and previous success rates. During the year management has identified that no provision was made for potential rating appeals during 2017/18, which has been remedied in the current year resulting in an increase in the provision during the year of £3.7 m in 2018/19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The underlying information used to determine the estimate appears appropriate; a more robust and prudent approach taken to identify appeals this year the financial statements include appropriate disclosure of the nature and the Council's approach to the calculation of this provision. 	 Green
Land and Buildings – Council Housing - £273.7m	<p>The Council owns 4,508 dwellings and is required to revalue these properties in accordance with DCLG's Stock Valuation for Resource Accounting guidance. The guidance requires the use of beacon methodology, in which a detailed valuation of representative property types is then applied to similar properties.</p> <p>The Council has engaged the District Valuer Service, to complete the valuation of these properties. The year end valuation of Council Housing was £272m, a net increase of £4m from 2017/18 (£268m). There was also a small reduction of 9 dwellings between 2017/18 to 2018/19 in relation to Right-to-Buy sales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council instructed the District Valuer Service to value the entire housing stock at 31 March 2019 using the beacon methodology. We have assessed the Council's external valuer to be competent, capable and objective. We have carried out completeness and accuracy testing of the underlying information provided to the valuer used to determine the estimate and have no issues to report. The valuation method remains consistent with the prior year. We have carried out sample testing of beacon properties and have no issues to report. The estimate is consistent against valuation trends of similar properties (Gerald Eve report) with house prices for the region increasing by 1.3%.. We are satisfied that the increase in value of 1.5% is reasonable We have agreed the HRA valuation report to the Statement of Accounts. 	 Green

Assessment

-  We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
-  We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
-  We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
-  We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious







Significant findings – key judgements and estimates

	Summary of management's policy	Audit Comments	Assessment
Land and Buildings – Other - £212m	<p>Other land and buildings comprises £129m of specialised assets such as schools and libraries, which are required to be valued at depreciated replacement cost (DRC) at year end, reflecting the cost of a modern equivalent asset necessary to deliver the same service provision. The remainder of other land and buildings (£83m) are not specialised in nature and are required to be valued at existing use in value (EUV) at year end. The Council has engaged NPS as external valuer to complete the valuation of non housing assets properties as at 31 December 2018 on a five yearly cyclical basis. 70% of total assets were revalued during 2018/19.</p> <p>The valuation of properties valued by the valuer has resulted in a net increase of £6.8 million. Management have considered the year end value of non-valued properties, and the potential valuation change in the assets revalued at 31 December 2018, based on the market review undertaken by the Council's Property Services Department at 31 March 2019, to determine whether there has been a material change in the total value of these properties. Management's assessment of assets not revalued has identified no material change to the properties value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority engages the services of two valuation experts, NPS and Sibbert Gregory to undertake valuations of other land ad buildings. • We have assessed the Authority's valuers, to be competent, capable and objective. • We have carried out completeness and accuracy testing of the underlying information provided to the valuer used to determine the estimate and have no issues to report. • The valuation method remains consistent with the prior year. • We confirm consistency of the estimate against the Gerald Eve report, and reasonableness of the increase in the estimate. • We have agreed the General Fund valuation report to the Fixed Asset Register and to the Statement of Accounts. 	 Green





Assessment

- We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Significant findings – key judgements and estimates

	Summary of management's policy	Audit Comments	Assessment
Net pension liability – £918.7m	<p>The Council's net pension liability at 31 March 2019 is £269,180m (PY £270,906m) comprising the Dorset Local Government and unfunded defined benefit pension scheme obligations. The Council uses Barnett Waddingham LLP to provide actuarial valuations of the Council's assets and liabilities derived from this scheme. A full actuarial valuation is required every three years. The latest full actuarial valuation was completed in 2016. A roll forward approach is used in intervening periods, which utilises key assumptions such as life expectancy, discount rates, salary growth and investment returns. Given the significant value of the net pension fund liability, small changes in assumptions can result in significant valuation movements. There has been a £16.6m net actuarial loss during 2018/19.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have assessed the Council's actuary, Barnett Waddingham, to be competent, capable and objective. We have performed additional tests in relation to accuracy of contribution figures, benefits paid, and investment returns to gain assurance over the 2018/19 roll forward calculation carried out by the actuary and have no issues to raise. We have used PwC as our auditor expert to assess the actuary and assumptions made by the actuary – see table below for our comparison of actuarial assumptions: 	
Discount rate	2.35%-2.45%	Assumption is reasonable and is the middle of expected ranges	 Green
Pension increase rate	2.30%-2.40%	Assumption is reasonable and towards the more optimistic end of expected ranges	 Green
Salary growth	3.9%	Lies within the 3.1% to 4.35% range	 Green
Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45 / 65	Pensioners: 22.9 Non-pensioners: 24.6	Assumption is based on the CMI 2013 model and allowance is in towards more optimistic end of the expected ranges	 Green
Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45 / 65	Pensioners: 24.8 Non-pensioners: 26.6	Assumption is based on the CMI 2013 model and allowance is towards the more optimistic end of expected ranges	 Green

Assessment

-  We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
-  We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
-  We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
-  We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Significant findings – key judgements and estimates

Summary of management's policy	Audit Comments	Assessment
Net pension liability – continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have confirmed the controls and processes over the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate. We have confirmed there were no significant changes in 2018/19 to the valuation method. We conducted an analytical review to confirm reasonableness of the Council's share of LPS pension assets. We considered the reasonableness of increase in estimate – following the McCloud ruling, as detailed on page 10, the Authority has agreed to revise its estimate and increase the pension liability by £5.109m. 	

Assessment

- We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Going concern

Our responsibility

As auditors, we are required to “obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence about the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern assumption in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and to conclude whether there is a material uncertainty about the entity's ability to continue as a going concern” (ISA (UK) 570).

Going concern commentary

Management's assessment process

Management has considered CIPFA's guidance on going concern for local government and has reviewed the financial position and reserves of the Council. Due to the reorganisation of local government services in Dorset, the Council ceased on 31 March 2019.

Auditor commentary

- Management has undertaken a robust and well documented assessment of the use of the going concern assumption and demonstrated that no material uncertainties exist.
- We concur with management's assessment of the use of going concern basis of accounting.
- It should be noted that although the Council ceased on 31 March 2019, going concern in the context of local government should be considered in the context of the CIPFA code 'an authority's financial statements shall be prepared on a going concern basis; that is, the accounts should be prepared on the assumption that the functions of the authority will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Transfers of services under combinations of public sector bodies (such as local government reorganisation) do not negate the presumption of going concern'.
- Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis is therefore appropriate

Work performed

We reviewed management's assessment of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and consideration of any material uncertainties.

Auditor commentary

- No issues were identified.

Concluding comments

Auditor commentary

- No issues were identified from our consideration of management's assessment of going concern or through our audit procedures. An unmodified opinion in respect of going concern will be given. We have however included an emphasis of matter paragraph reflecting the transfer of services to the new authority.

Other communication requirements

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by auditing standards and the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

Issue	Commentary
① Matters in relation to fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have previously discussed the risk of fraud with the Audit Committee of Borough of Poole. We have not been made aware of any other incidents in the period and no other issues have been identified during the course of our audit procedures.
② Matters in relation to related parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not aware of any related parties or related party transactions which have not been disclosed. Management was asked to include transactions with subsidiary companies within the single entity's related party note.
③ Matters in relation to laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have not made us aware of any significant incidences of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations and we have not identified any incidences from our audit work.
④ Written representations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A standard letter of representation has been requested from the included in the Audit and Governance Committee papers. Specific representations have been requested from management in respect of the significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates for the current value of land and building assets.
⑤ Confirmation requests from third parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We requested from management, permission to obtain confirmations from the Public Works Loans Board and other lenders for loans and requested from management permission to send confirmation requests to various institutions for bank and investment balances. This permission was granted and the requests were sent. All responses required were returned.
⑥ Disclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our review identified a number of omissions in relation to the new financial reporting standards IFRS 9 and IFRS 15. The disclosure note for pensions in the group accounts was also omitted.
⑦ Significant difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We experienced no significant difficulties in undertaking our audit work, however we have identified a number of disclosure errors and misclassifications in the financial statements and the quality of working papers to support the figures in the financial statements requires improvement. We appreciate that the work required by the Authority's officers to prepare for local government reorganisation has impacted on preparation for the audit and will work with finance staff to clearly set out our requirements for the audit of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and improve the quality of working papers and supporting audit evidence.

Other responsibilities under the Code

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

Issue	Commentary
① Other information	<p>We are required to give an opinion on whether the other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.</p> <p>No inconsistencies have been identified. We plan to issue an unqualified opinion in this respect – refer to Appendix E</p>
② Matters on which we report by exception	<p>We are required to report on a number of matters by exception in a numbers of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the Annual Governance Statement does not meet the disclosure requirements set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance or is misleading or inconsistent with the other information of which we are aware from our audit • If we have applied any of our statutory powers or duties <p>We have nothing to report on these matters.</p>
③ Specified procedures for Whole of Government Accounts	<p>We are required to carry out specified procedures (on behalf of the NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidation pack under WGA group audit instructions.</p> <p>Note that work is not required as the Council does not exceed the threshold</p>
④ Certification of the closure of the audit	<p>We intend to certify the closure of the 2018/19 audit of Borough of Poole in the audit opinion, as detailed in Appendix E.</p>

Value for Money

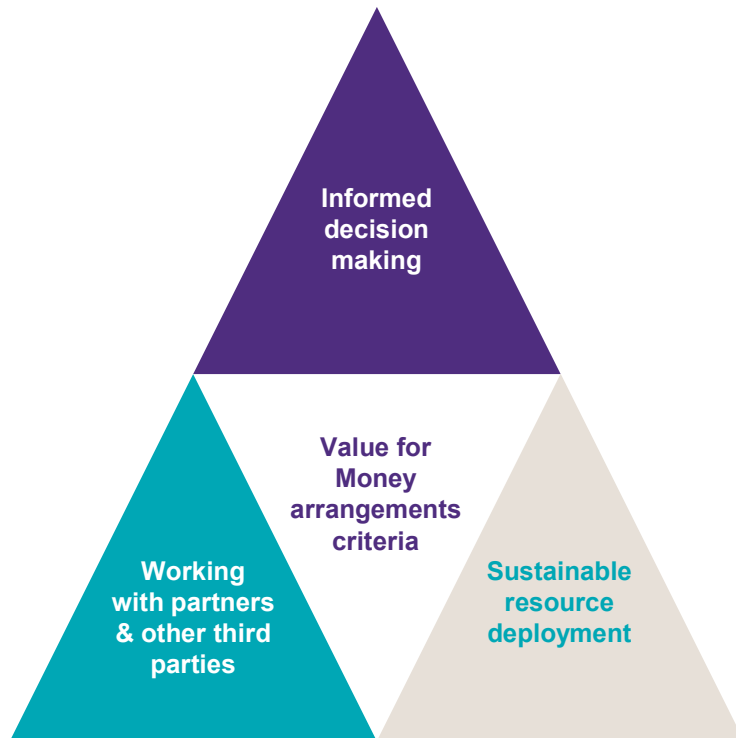
Background to our VFM approach

The NAO issued its guidance for auditors on Value for Money work for 2017/18 in November 2017. The guidance states that for local government bodies, auditors are required to give a conclusion on whether the Council has proper arrangements in place.

The guidance identifies one single criterion for auditors to evaluate:

“In all significant respects, the audited body takes properly informed decisions and deploys resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.”

This is supported by three sub-criteria, as set out below:



Risk assessment

We carried out an initial risk assessment in December 2018 and identified a significant risk in respect of specific areas of proper arrangements using the guidance contained in AGN03. We communicated this risk to you in our Audit Plan dated January 2019.

We have continued our review of relevant documents up to the date of giving our report, and have not identified any further significant risks where we need to perform further work.

The risk that we identified as as follows:

- financial sustainability;

Our risk assessment is a dynamic process and we have had regard to new information which emerged since we issued our Audit Plan: No additional significant risks have been identified.

We carried out further work only in respect of the significant risk we identified from our initial and ongoing risk assessment.

Value for Money

Our work

AGN 03 requires us to disclose our views on significant qualitative aspects of the Council's arrangements for delivering economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

We have focused our work on the significant risks that we identified in the Council's arrangements. In arriving at our conclusion, our main considerations were:

- the Council's arrangements for delivering its budget including the arrangements for monitoring and reporting delivery;

We have set out more detail on the risk we identified, the results of the work we performed and the conclusions we drew from this work on pages 20-21.

Overall conclusion

Based on the work we performed to address the significant risks, we concluded that:

- the Council had proper arrangements in all significant respects to ensure it delivered value for money in its use of resources.

The text of our report, which confirms this can be found at Appendix D.

Significant difficulties in undertaking our work

We did not identify any significant difficulties in undertaking our work on your arrangements which we wish to draw to your attention.

Significant matters discussed with management

There were no matters where no other evidence was available or matters of such significance to our conclusion or that we required written representation from management or those charged with governance.

Key findings

We set out below our key findings against the significant risks we identified through our initial risk assessment and further risks identified through our ongoing review of documents.

Significant risk

Financial Sustainability

The Authority has historically performed well at managing its financial position despite ongoing reductions in Government funding and an increased demand for services. The Authority is currently reporting a balanced position (as at the end of September 2018) for 2018/19 and has been able to make an increased contribution to reserves earmarked to support transformation.

Demand and the associated costs continue to grow for services for vulnerable older people and vulnerable children, the Authority has identified a cumulative funding gap of £6.6 million to 2020/21 in the medium term financial plan. The Authority has raised base council tax by 2.99% and implemented the second year of the social care precept of 3% in order to provide a firm base for the future when services transfer to the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council on 1 April 2019.

We will review the Authority's arrangements for delivering its budget including the arrangements for monitoring and reporting delivery of savings plans for 2018/19. We will also consider the financial impact of LGR in Dorset and any financial issues arising from Brexit.

Findings

Revenue outturn for 2018/19

We have reviewed the Council's outturn against budget and arrangements for financial planning. The Council achieved a balanced financial outturn after meeting the in year costs associated with local government reorganisation. This is in part due to caution exercised in spending decisions in the run up to LGR and grant funding being received late in the year. Arrangements in place remained unchanged during the year and provide sufficient clarity to support effective monitoring of the financial position. Savings plans are incorporated in to the service budgets and are not individually detailed and reported as part of the Council's publicly available budget monitoring reports.

The Council had arrangements in place for Brexit planning, however the delay in the UK's exit from the European Union has meant that any impact will now be the responsibility of the new Council.

Auditor View

The Council has continued to operate under significant financial pressures, however, it has effective arrangements in place to routinely monitor its budget and take appropriate action to mitigate against any significant variances or additional calls on resources. This is the last budget and outturn report that the Council will produce. The services of Borough of Poole transferred to the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council on 1 April 2019. The balanced financial position contributes to the opening financial position for the new Council, allowing a higher level of reserves to support the ambitions of the new Council going forward.

Independence and ethics

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention. We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and confirm that we, as a firm, and each covered person, are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

Further, we have complied with the requirements of the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 01 issued in December 2017 which sets out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

Details of fees charged are detailed in Appendix C

Audit and Non-audit services

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the Council. The following non-audit services were identified/ No non-audit services were identified which were charged from the beginning of the financial year to 25 July 2019, as well as the threats to our independence and safeguards that have been applied to mitigate these threats.

	Fees £	Threats identified	Safeguards
Audit related			
Certification of Housing capital receipts grant	3,000	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £3,000 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £72,344 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.
Certification of Teachers Pensions	3,000	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £3,000 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £72,344 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.
Certification of Housing Benefit Subsidy	14,000	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £14,000 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £72,344 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.
Non-audit related			
CFO Insights	5,000	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £5,000 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £72,344 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.

These services are consistent with the group's policy on the allotment of non-audit work to your auditors. All services have been approved by the Chief Finance Officer. None of the services provided are subject to contingent fees.

Follow up of prior year recommendations

We identified the following issues in the audit of Borough of Poole Council's 2017/18 financial statements, which resulted in a recommendation being reported in our 2017/18 Audit Findings report. We have followed up on the implementation of our recommendation and note the recommendation below is are still to be considered.

Assessment	Issue and risk previously communicated	Update on actions taken to address the issue
X	<p>Investment Properties</p> <p>Accounting standards require that investment properties are included in the financial statements at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. The Council uses an external valuer to provide these valuations. Our audit testing identified that the Council's instructions to the valuer requested valuations to be carried out as 31 December. Although we are satisfied that the Council has demonstrated that the carrying value is not materially different from the fair value as at 31 March, this has necessitated additional work by the Council.</p>	<p>The Council should consider that its instructions to the valuer specify that valuations of investment properties are carried out to provide a valuation at 31 March.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council is undertaking a review of its valuation processes including the date of future revaluations for both investment properties and other land and buildings.</p>

Assessment

✓ Action completed

X Not yet addressed

Audit Adjustments

We are required to report all non trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Impact of adjusted misstatements

All adjusted misstatements are set out in detail below along with the impact on the key statements and the reported net expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2019.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Statement of Financial Position £' 000	Impact on total net expenditure £'000
<p>1 Potential impact of the McCloud judgement</p> <p>The legal ruling around age discrimination (McCloud - Court of Appeal) has implications for pension schemes where transitional arrangements on changing benefits have been implemented.</p> <p>The Council has received an estimate from its actuary of the potential impact of the McCloud ruling. The actuary's estimate was of a possible increase in pension liabilities of £5.109m. Management has adjusted the pension liability for this figure and has made a corresponding entry to the pensions reserve.</p> <p>The increase in service costs has been treated as an increase to actuarial losses on pensions assets/liabilities rather than as an increase in service costs. This treatment results in an unadjusted classification error in the financial statements.</p>	5,109	5,109	
Overall impact	£5,109	£5,109	£5,109

Audit Adjustments - Adjusted

We are required to report all non trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Misclassification and disclosure changes

The table below provides details of misclassification and disclosure changes identified during the audit which have been made in the final set of financial statements.

Disclosure omission	Detail	Auditor recommendations	Adjusted?
Impact of IFRS 15 - Revenue	No disclosure was included within the financial statements reflecting the requirements of IFRS 15	Narrative note added to identify revenue from service recipients.	✓
Impact of IFRS 9- Financial Instruments	The implementation of IFRS 9, requires more detailed disclosures in respect of expected credit losses	The Council has amended the disclosures to more fully reflect the requirements of the new standard	✓
Classification of Housing Revenue non operational assets	The Council has included £2.184 million of assets as non operational, our review identified that these should be treated as surplus assets.	The Council has reclassified these assets and restated note 10 to the Housing Revenue Account.	✓
Movement of Housing Revenue Account Fixed Assets - Transfer of garages	The Council transferred £3.54 million of garages to the general fund, the transfer was shown as a movement from council dwellings rather than other land and buildings.	The note was amended to correctly classify the transfer.	✓
Expense Allowances	Expenses allowances for non taxable mileage reimbursed were incorrectly included in the table of senior officers remuneration.	The Council has amended the table to remove these entries.	✓
Change of accounting policy Investment Properties	The Authority has revised its accounting policy in respect of the classification of investment properties, to align the treatment in respect of the new Council. In total this was £	In our view this change in accounting policy is material, and a prior period adjustment should be made to the financial statements. Management is considering the impact of this adjustment. There is no material impact on the current year figures.	TBC
Other amendments	Our audit work identified a number of minor typographical and consistency errors.	Management has amended these as required.	✓

Audit Adjustments - Unadjusted

Impact of unadjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of adjustments identified during the 2018/19 audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements. The Audit and Governance Committee is required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below:

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Statement of Financial Position £' 000	Impact on total net expenditure £'000	Reason for not adjusting
1 Impact of the McCloud judgement on service costs	5,109	-	0	The impact is not material and is a classification error. The entry is reversed through the MIRS and has no overall impact.
Overall impact	£5,109	£nil	£nil	

Fees

We confirm below our final fees charged for the audit and provision of non-audit services.

Audit Fees

Our Audit Plan included a PSAA published scale fee for 2018/19 of £72,344. Our audit approach, including the risk assessment, continues as the year progresses and fees are reviewed and updated as necessary as our work progresses.

Update to our risk assessment – Additional work in respect of the audit code

The table below sets out the additional work which we have undertaken to complete the audit, along with the impact on the audit fee where possible. Please note that these proposed additional fees are estimates based on our best projection of work and will be subject to approval by PSAA in line with the Terms of Appointment.

Additional Audit Fees

Area of work	Timing	Comment	£
Assessing the impact of the McCloud Ruling	June – July 2019	The Government's transitional arrangements for pensions were ruled discriminatory by the Court of Appeal last December. The Supreme Court refused the Government's application for permission to appeal this ruling. As part of our audit we considered the impact on the financial statement along with any audit reporting requirements. This included consultation with our own internal actuary in their capacity as an auditor expert.	1,500
Pensions – IAS 19	June - July 2019	The Financial Reporting Council has highlighted that the quality of work by audit firms in respect of IAS 19 needs to improve across local government audits. Accordingly, we have increased the level of scope and coverage in respect of IAS 19 this year.	1,500
PPE Valuation – work of experts	June - July 2019	As above, the Financial Reporting Council has highlighted that auditors need to improve the quality of work on PPE Valuations across the sector. We have increased the volume and scope of our audit work to reflect this.	4,000

Total Audit Fees

Audit fee	Actual 2017/18 fee £	Planned 2018/19 fee £	Final 2018/19 fee £
Council Audit	93,953	72,344	72,344
Additional Audit Fees (see above)	-	-	7,000
Total audit fees (excl VAT)	93,953	72,344	79,344

Non Audit Fees

Fees for other services	Fees £
Audit related services:	
• Certification of Housing Benefit (estimate)	14,000
• Certification of teachers pension	3,000
• Certification of pooling of housing capital receipts return	3,000
• CFO Insights	5,000
Total fees for other services	20,000

Audit opinion

We anticipate we will provide the Group with an unmodified audit report

Independent auditor's report to the members of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council in respect of Borough of Poole

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Borough of Poole (the 'Authority') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2019 which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement, Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Housing Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Statement, the Housing Revenue Account, the Collection Fund, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Balance Sheet and the Group Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. 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 2018/19.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

give a true and fair view of the financial position of the group and of the Authority as at 31 March 2019 and of the group's expenditure and income and the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended; have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19; and have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

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 group and the Authority 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 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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

the Chief Financial Officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
the Chief Financial Officer has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the group's or the Authority's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Emphasis of Matter - Local Government Reorganisation in Dorset

We draw attention to the disclosures made in note 7 to the core financial statements concerning local government reorganisation in Dorset. As stated in note 7, the Authority ceased to exist on 31 March 2019 on the creation of two new unitary authorities in Dorset and from 1 April 2019 the Authority's services, functions, assets and liabilities transferred to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Other information

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, the Narrative Report and the Annual Governance Statement other than the Authority and group financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 of the group and Authority obtained in 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 or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)' published by CIPFA and SOLACE or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements and our knowledge of the Authority gained through our work in relation to the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts, the Narrative Report and the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:
 we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
 we make a written recommendation to the Authority under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
 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 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
 we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
 we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.
 We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

Responsibilities of the Authority, the Chief Financial Officer and Those Charged with Governance for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts set out on page 9, the Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Chief Financial Officer. 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 2018/19, 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 group's and the Authority'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 there is an intention by government that the services provided by the Authority will no longer be provided.

The Audit and Governance Committee of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council as successor body to Borough of Poole is Those Charged with Governance. Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

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.

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

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - Conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**Conclusion**

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2017, we are satisfied that the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing 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.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Authority's arrangements for securing 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 to be satisfied that the Authority 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 Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2017, as to whether in all significant respects the Authority had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.

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 be satisfied that the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - Certificate

We certify that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of the Borough of Poole in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, as a body, in respect of Borough of Poole in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report in respect of Borough of Poole and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and the members of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Paul Dossett, Key Audit Partner
 for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor



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