

The Annual Audit Letter for South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable

Year ended 31 March 2019



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Your key Grant Thornton team members are:

Paul Grady

Key Audit Partner

T: 020 7728 2430

E: paul.d.grady@uk.gt.com

Ellen Millington

Manager

T: 020 7728 3379

E: ellen.millington@uk.gt.com

Oliver Durbin

Executive

T: 020 7728 2643

E: oliver.j.durbin@uk.gt.com

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Executive Summary

Purpose

Our Annual Audit Letter (Letter) summarises the key findings arising from the work that we have carried out at the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire (the PCC) and the Chief Constable for South Yorkshire (the Chief Constable) for the year ended 31 March 2019.

This Letter is intended to provide a commentary on the results of our work to the PCC, Chief Constable and external stakeholders, and to highlight issues that we wish to draw to the attention of the public. In preparing this Letter, we have followed the National Audit Office (NAO)'s Code of Audit Practice and Auditor Guidance Note (AGN) 07 – 'Auditor Reporting'. We reported the detailed findings from our audit work to the Council's Joint Independent Audit Committee, and the PCC and Chief Constable as those charged with governance in our Audit Findings Report in July 2019.

Our work

Respective responsibilities

We have carried out our audit in accordance with the NAO's Code of Audit Practice, which reflects the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act). Our key responsibilities are to:

- give opinions on the PCC and Chief Constable's financial statements (section two)
- assess the PCC and Chief Constable's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (the value for money conclusion) (section three).

In our audits of the group, PCC and Chief Constable financial statements, we comply with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) and other guidance issued by the NAO.

Materiality	We determined materiality for the audit of the group, PCC and Chief Constable's financial statements to be £5,706,000, which is 2% of the Chief Constable's gross revenue expenditure.
Financial Statements opinion	We gave unqualified opinions on the PCC and Chief Constable's financial statements on 31 July 2019.
Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)	Our work on the PCC and Chief Constable's consolidation return, following guidance issued by the NAO, is ongoing as at the date of writing this letter. This work necessarily takes place following the completion of the financial statements audit.
Use of statutory powers	We did not identify any matters which required us to exercise our additional statutory powers.
Value for Money arrangements	We were satisfied that the PCC and Chief Constable put in place proper arrangements to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources. We reflected this in our audit reports to the PCC and Chief Constable on 31 July 2019.
Certificate	We intend to certify that we have completed the audits of the financial statements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire and the Chief Constable for South Yorkshire in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice alongside submitting our Assurance Statement on the group's consolidation return to the NAO.

Executive Summary

Working with the PCC and Chief Constable

During the year we have delivered a number of successful outcomes with you:

- An efficient audit – we delivered an efficient audit with you in June and July, reporting to the Joint Independent Audit Committee on 23 July 2019 and issuing the audit opinions on 31 July 2019.
- Understanding your operational health – through the value for money conclusion we provided you with assurance on your operational effectiveness.
- Sharing our insight – we provided regular audit committee updates covering best practice.
- Providing training – we provided your teams with free training on financial statements and annual reporting

We would like to record our appreciation for the assistance and co-operation provided to us during our audit by the PCC and Chief Constable, management, finance team and other staff.

Grant Thornton UK LLP
August 2019

Audit of the Financial Statements

Our audit approach

Materiality

In our audit of the group, PCC and Chief Constable's financial statements, we use the concept of materiality to determine the nature, timing and extent of our work, and in evaluating the results of our work. We define materiality as the size of the misstatement in the financial statements that would lead a reasonably knowledgeable person to change or influence their economic decisions.

We determined materiality for the audit of the group, PCC and Chief Constable's financial statements to be £5,706,000, which is 2% of the Chief Constable's gross revenue expenditure. We used this benchmark as, in our view, users of the financial statements are most interested in where the organisations have spent their revenue and budget allocations in the year.

We set a lower threshold of £285,000, above which we reported errors to the PCC, Chief Constable and Joint Independent Audit Committee in our Audit Findings Report.

The scope of our audit

Our audit involves obtaining sufficient evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements to give reasonable assurance that they are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes assessing whether:

- the accounting policies are appropriate, have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed;
- the significant accounting estimates made by management are reasonable; and
- the overall presentation of the financial statements gives a true and fair view.

We also read the remainder of the financial statements the narrative reports and the annual governance statements published alongside the financial statements to check it is consistent with our understanding of the PCC and Chief Constable and with the financial statements on which we gave our opinions.

We carry out our audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) and the NAO Code of Audit Practice. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the PCC and Chief Constable's business and is risk based.

We identified key risks and set out overleaf the work we performed in response to these risks and the results of this work.

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks

These are the significant risks which had the greatest impact on our overall strategy and where we focused more of our work.

Risks identified in our audit plan	Relevant to PCC or Chief Constable?	Findings and conclusions
<p>Valuation of land and buildings</p> <p>The PCC and Group revalue their land and buildings on a rolling five-yearly basis. This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£73.3 million as at 31 March 2018) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions. Additionally, management need to ensure the carrying value in the PCC and Group financial statements is not materially different from the current value or the fair value (for surplus assets) at the financial statements date, where a rolling programme is used.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of land and buildings, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk of material misstatement.</p>	PCC	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert wrote to the valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out challenged the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding tested revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the PCC and Group asset register evaluated the assumptions made by management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different to current value at year end. <p>Management engaged their valuer to perform a desktop valuation exercise covering the land and buildings which had not been revalued as at 31 March 2019 as part of the five-yearly cyclical valuation process. This indicated that the carrying value of the assets was materially different from their current value under the accounting standards at year-end. Management amended the carrying values of the affected properties in their financial statements accordingly. This resulted in an increase of £8,044k to the valuation of property, plant and equipment on the balance sheet, of which £3,448k impacted upon the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the remaining £4,596k impacted upon the PCC's unusable reserves.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	Relevant to PCC or Chief Constable?	Findings and conclusions
<p>Valuation of land and buildings (continued)</p> <p>The PCC and Group revalue their land and buildings on a rolling five-yearly basis. This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£73.3 million as at 31 March 2018) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions. Additionally, management need to ensure the carrying value in the PCC and Group financial statements is not materially different from the current value or the fair value (for surplus assets) at the financial statements date, where a rolling programme is used.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of land and buildings, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk of material misstatement.</p>	PCC	<p>It was noted during our review of the work performed by the valuer on the properties which had originally been revalued as at 31 March 2019, that finance costs had been included in the valuer's depreciated replacement cost (DRC) calculations for specialised assets. This contravenes the Government Financial Reporting Manual and the CIPFA Code, which states that an 'instant build' approach should be used in DRC calculations, which would exclude the impact of finance costs. The impact of this error was a £1,703k overstatement of the values of land and buildings in the draft accounts, of which £444k impacted on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the remaining £1,259k impacted on the PCC's unusable reserves. Management elected not to adjust their financial statements for this error on the grounds that it was immaterial.</p> <p>No further issues were identified through our audit work in respect of valuation of land and buildings.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	Relevant to PCC or Chief Constable?	Findings and conclusions
<p>Valuation of net pension liability</p> <p>The group's pension fund net liability, as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved (£3,471 million in the group's balance sheet) and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions. We therefore identified valuation of the pension fund net liability as a significant risk of material misstatement.</p>	Both	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gained an understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the group's pension fund net liability, for both the Police Officer Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme is not materially misstated and evaluated the design of the associated controls; evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management experts (actuaries) for the Police Officer Pension Scheme and Local Government Pension Scheme for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work; assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuaries who carried out the group's pension liability valuations; assessed the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the group to the actuaries to estimate the liability; tested the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuaries; undertook procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report; and in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme liability, obtained assurances from the auditor of the South Yorkshire Pension Fund as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data; contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements.

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	Relevant to PCC or Chief Constable?	Findings and conclusions
<p>Valuation of net pension liability (continued)</p> <p>The group's pension fund net liability, as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved (£3,471 million in the group's balance sheet) and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions. We therefore identified valuation of the pension fund net liability as a significant risk of material misstatement.</p>	Both	<p>Subsequent to the submission of the draft financial statements to audit, management obtained revised actuarial reports from their police pension scheme and local government pension scheme actuaries to take account of potential increased liabilities arising from the McCloud transitional protection ruling. This resulted in an estimated total increase to the net pensions liability in the group balance sheet of £152,337k, with a corresponding increase in past service costs recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. We reviewed the approach and assumptions used by management's actuaries and found these to be reasonable. Management amended their financial statements accordingly. The adjustment also impacted on the Movement in Reserves Statement, Cash Flow Statement, Expenditure and Funding Analysis and a number of other disclosure notes in both the group and Chief Constable financial statements.</p> <p>No further issues were identified through our audit work in respect of valuation of the net pension liability.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	Relevant to PCC or Chief Constable?	Findings and conclusions
<p>Completeness of provisions and contingent liabilities</p> <p>Included within the PCC's medium to long-term budget are a number of costs relating to legacy issues, including the Hillsborough disaster and historic CSE cases. Dependent on whether the timing and likely value of these costs can be reliably estimated, in conjunction with the expected likelihood of the allocation of any future Home Office special grant money, provisions are recognised or contingent liabilities disclosed within the PCC and Group's financial statements in respect of these issues.</p> <p>The highly unusual and complex nature of the potential and actual claims in respect of these cases makes it very difficult to estimate the quantum and likelihood of potential compensation payments, if any, that may be paid out to individual claimants or in total.</p> <p>We therefore identified completeness of provisions and contingent liabilities as a significant risk of material misstatement.</p>	PCC	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gained an understanding of the circumstances of the relevant issues, the current budget forecasts and accounting treatment to date; reviewed each provision or contingent liability to determine whether the treatment is consistent with IAS 37 and the CIPFA Code; documented and assessed management's processes in place for ensuring that all provisions and contingent liabilities are captured; assessed management's judgements and accounting treatment against underlying evidence, legal advice, information from insurers and other supporting information. <p>Our audit work did not identify any material issues in respect of completeness of provisions and contingent liabilities.</p>
<p>Management override of internal controls</p> <p>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 Chief Constable and PCC face external scrutiny of their spending and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance.</p> <p>We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk of material misstatement.</p>	Both	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated the design effectiveness of management controls over journals analysed the journals listing and determined the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals tested unusual journals recorded during the year and after the draft accounts stage for appropriateness and corroboration gained an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and considered their reasonableness with regard to corroborative evidence evaluated the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions. <p>Our audit work did not identify any material issues in respect of management override of controls.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Audit opinion

We gave an unqualified opinion on the group, PCC and Chief Constable's financial statements on 31 July 2019.

Preparation of the financial statements

The PCC and Chief Constable presented us with draft financial statements in accordance with the national deadline, and provided a good set of working papers to support them. The finance team responded promptly and efficiently to our queries during the course of the audit.

Issues arising from the audit of the financial statements

We reported the key issues from our audit to the PCC and Chief Constable during July 2019, and to the Joint Independent Audit Committee on 23 July 2019.

In addition to the key audit risks reported above, we identified the following issues/adjustment throughout our audit that we have asked management to address for the next financial year:

Cash held on behalf of third parties – we identified that the PCC and group balance sheets included £1,105k of monies held on behalf of third parties, within 'Cash and Cash Equivalents', with a corresponding entry within 'Short Term Creditors'. These monies pertained to the PCC's right to retain monies from individuals under investigation, in respect of the Proceeds of Crime Act, Drug Trafficking Offences Act, Misuse of Drugs Act and Police Property Fund Act.

These monies should not be held on the PCC or Group balance sheets as either assets or liabilities, since they do not represent genuine assets or liabilities of the PCC or Group. The cash should be held in a separate bank account and should not be used as working capital or for treasury management purposes.

Management amended their financial statements to adjust for the identified error and will continue to manage cash held on behalf of third parties separately from other cash balances in future years.

Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report

We are required to review the Annual Governance Statements and Narrative Reports for the PCC and Chief Constable. The PCC and Chief Constable published the documents on their websites in line with the national deadlines.

Both documents were prepared in line with the CIPFA Code and relevant supporting guidance. We confirmed that the documents were consistent with the financial statements prepared by the PCC and Chief Constable and with our knowledge of the entities.

Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

Our work on the PCC and Chief Constable's consolidation return, following guidance issued by the NAO, is ongoing as at the date of writing this letter. This work necessarily takes place following the completion of the financial statements audit.

Certificate of closure of the audit

We intend to certify that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of the PCC for South Yorkshire and Chief Constable for South Yorkshire in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice alongside submission of the WGA Assurance Statement required above.

Value for Money conclusion

Background

We carried out our review in accordance with the NAO Code of Audit Practice, following the guidance issued by the NAO in November 2017 which specified the 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.

Key findings

Our first step in carrying out our work was to perform a risk assessment and identify the risks where we concentrated our work.

The risks we identified and the work we performed are set out overleaf.

As part of our Audit Findings report agreed with the PCC and Chief Constable in July 2019, we agreed recommendations to address our findings.

Overall Value for Money conclusion

We are satisfied that in all significant respects the PCC and Chief Constable put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2019.

Value for Money conclusion

Value for Money Risks

Risks identified in our audit plan	How we responded to the risk	Findings and conclusions
<p>Medium Term Financial Planning Police funding continues to be stretched with increasing cost pressures and complexity. The NAO reported in September that in real terms, central government funding for Forces had fallen by 30% since 2010/11, this being during a period when crime rates have been on the rise. As a result, budget gaps have arisen in each year in your medium-term forecast, even when assuming maximum precept rises, which will require the achievement of significant savings plans to bridge.</p> <p>In addition to this, you face further uncertainty in relation to future Home Office special grant funding for the significant legacy costs which you are likely to face in respect of the Hillsborough disaster and historic CSE cases, including the basis on which this will be allocated and managed.</p>	<p>As part of our work we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewed your medium-term financial forecast and examine underlying assumptions and dependencies for robustness. • examined the detail of your savings plans aimed at reducing future funding gaps, including whether these are aligned to realistic outcomes from your strategic change programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are conscious of the challenges faced in respect of medium term financial planning. • You are engaging in proactive discussions with the Home Office to ensure that sustainable funding, in respect of the ongoing legacy issues which are likely to affect you well into the medium term, is secured. • You are working to refine your budget-setting process such that underspends and overspends such as those observed in recent years do not recur, and resources can be appropriately allocated to areas of need or to enhance your operational structure through capital programmes or investment in change and innovation. • Understanding the reasons for savings and transformation slippage, and capital programme slippage, is key, as part of a continual process of improvement to strengthen future planning assumptions and identify risks that may require mitigation to avoid future slippage. It is also important that the consequences of slippage and delayed or deferred benefits realisation are understood and considered within the overarching financial framework • It is important you continue to strengthen scenario planning arrangements in light of the future funding uncertainties. Scenario planning arrangements should include plans for 'better than expected' which should be supported by a pipeline of investment projects that can be prioritised as and when funds are available. • Overall, we are satisfied that sufficient arrangements are in place to mitigate the risk identified.

Value for Money conclusion

Value for Money Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	How we responded to the risk	Findings and conclusions
<p>Transformation and Change Programmes</p> <p>A key factor in meeting the challenging financial outlook in the medium-term will be the success of your Business Change Programme A significant proportion of the discretionary investment spend within your medium term forecast is likely to relate to change and transformation programmes within the organisation. The customer contact redesign programme at Atlas Court is now in the implementation phase, with transformation programmes in enabling services planned for the forthcoming months.</p>	<p>As part of our work we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewed your arrangements for designing, approving, implementing and monitoring transformation and change programmes and ensuring that these are aligned to your strategic objectives. • assessed how well prepared you are for identifying and measuring the benefits realised once these programmes are embedded, including monitoring how well potential non-financial benefits are converted into measurable organisational improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have implemented a number of key change programmes over recent years to transform your operational model, and are continuing to do this in line with your strategic aims for the organisation, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan and 'Plan on a Page'. • Some of these programmes, such as neighbourhood policing and demand modelling, have been effective in assisting you to provide a high-performing and well-regarded service. • We are satisfied that sufficient programme management infrastructure exists within the Force to provide sufficient oversight for major change programmes as will be required to ensure strong ongoing operational and financial performance. • Your collaboration effectiveness matrix has been particularly effective in assessing current collaborative initiatives and understanding whether these remain fit for purpose. • Structures and processes in place in relation to internally generated business cases are not consistently exploited in an effective way to ensure that business cases are approved with regard to the wider overarching strategic direction of the organisation. • Whilst specific resource within the business change and innovation team is dedicated to the identification and monitoring of financial and non-financial benefits, during 2018/19 a number of slippages occurred. It will be important for the success of this and future change programmes that intended benefits are clearly delineated in all stages of the project lifecycle, and realisation closely monitored such that contingencies can be built in where required. We noted that benefits realisation has been built in to the internal audit work programme for 2019/20 which is an encouraging sign that you are mindful of the significance of this process. • Overall, we are satisfied that sufficient arrangements were in place during 2018/19 to mitigate the risk identified.

A. Reports issued and fees

We confirm below our final reports issued and fees charged for the audit and confirm there were no fees for the provision of non audit services.

Reports issued

Report	Date issued
Audit Plan	January 2019
Audit Findings Report	July 2019
Annual Audit Letter	August 2019

Fees

	Planned £	Actual fees £	2017/18 fees £
Statutory audit – PCC	30,140	32,540	39,143
Statutory audit – Chief Constable	14,438	18,438	18,750
Total fees	44,578	50,978	57,893

Audit fee variation

As outlined in our audit plan, the 2018-19 scale fee published by PSAA of £44,578 assumes that the scope of the audit does not significantly change. There are a number of areas where the scope of the audit has changed, which has led to additional work. These are set out in the following table.

Area	Reason	Fee proposed
Assessing the impact of the McCloud ruling	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. This resulted in significant material amendments to the pension liabilities in the financial statements. As part of our audit we have reviewed the revised actuarial assessment of the impact on the financial statements along with any audit reporting requirements.	£2,400
Pensions – IAS 19	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 to reflect this.	£1,600
PPE Valuation – work of experts	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.	£2,400
Total		£6,400

Fee variations are subject to PSAA approval.

Our commitment to our local government clients

- Senior level investment
- Local presence enhancing our responsiveness, agility and flexibility.
- High quality audit delivery
- Collaborative working across the public sector
- Wider connections across the public sector economy, including with health and other local government bodies
- Investment in Health and Wellbeing, Social Value and the Vibrant Economy
- Sharing of best practice and our thought leadership.
- Invitations to training events locally and regionally – bespoke training for emerging issues
- Further investment in data analytics and informatics to keep our knowledge of the areas up to date and to assist in designing a fully tailored audit approach

Our relationship with our clients – why are we best placed?

- We work closely with our clients to ensure that we understand their financial challenges, performance and future strategy.
- We deliver robust, pragmatic and timely financial statements and Value for Money audits
- We have an open, two way dialogue with clients that support improvements in arrangements and the audit process
- Feedback meetings tell us that our clients are pleased with the service we deliver. We are not complacent and will continue to improve further
- Our locally based, experienced teams have a commitment to both our clients and the wider public sector
- We are a Firm that specialises in Local Government, Health and Social Care, and Cross Sector working, with over 25 Key Audit Partners, the most public sector specialist Engagement Leads of any firm
- We have strong relationships with CIPFA, SOLCAE, the Society of Treasurers, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care and others.

New opportunities and challenges for your community

The Local Government economy

Local authorities face unprecedented challenges including:

- Financial Sustainability – addressing funding gaps and balancing needs against resources
- Service Sustainability – Adult Social Care funding gaps and pressure on Education, Housing, Transport
- Transformation – new models of delivery, greater emphasis on partnerships, more focus on economic development
- Technology – cyber security and risk management

At a wider level, the political environment remains complex:

- The government continues its negotiation with the EU over Brexit, and future arrangements remain uncertain.
- We will consider your arrangements for managing and reporting your financial resources as part of our work in reaching our Value for Money conclusion.
- We will keep you informed of changes to the financial reporting requirements for 2018/19 through on-going discussions and invitations to our technical update workshops.

Delivering real value through:

- Early advice on technical accounting issues, providing certainty of accounting treatments, future financial planning implications and resulting in draft statements that are 'right first time'
- Knowledge and expertise in all matters local government, including local objections and challenge, where we have an unrivalled depth of expertise.
- Early engagement on issues, especially on ADMs, housing delivery changes, Children services and Adult Social Care restructuring, partnership working with the NHS, inter authority agreements, governance and financial reporting
- Implementation of our recommendations have resulted in demonstrable improvements in your underlying arrangements, for example accounting for unique assets, financial management, reporting and governance, and tax implications for the Cornwall Council companies
- Robust but pragmatic challenge – seeking early liaison on issues, and having the difficult conversations early to ensure a 'no surprises' approach – always doing the right thing
- Providing regional training and networking opportunities for your teams on technical accounting issues and developments and changes to Annual Reporting requirements
- An efficient audit approach, providing tangible benefits, such as releasing finance staff earlier and prompt resolution of issues.

Grant Thornton in Local Government

Our client base and delivery



- We are the largest supplier of external audit services to local government
- We audit over 150 local government clients
- We signed 95% of our local government opinions in 2017/18 by 31 July
- In our latest independent client service review, we consistently score 9/10 or above. Clients value our strong interaction, our local knowledge and wealth of expertise.

Our connections



- We are well connected to MHCLG, the NAO and key local government networks
- We work with CIPFA, Think Tanks and legal firms to develop workshops and good practice
- We have a strong presence across all parts of local government including blue light services
- We provide thought leadership, seminars and training to support our clients and to provide solutions

Our people



- We have over 25 engagement leads accredited by ICAEW, and over 250 public sector specialists
- We provide technical and personal development training
- We employ over 80 Public Sector trainee accountants

Our quality



- Our audit approach complies with the NAO's Code of Audit Practice, and International Standards on Auditing
- We are fully compliant with ethical standards
- Your audit team has passed all quality inspections including QAD and AQR

Our technical support



- We have specialist leads for Public Sector Audit quality and technical
- We provide national technical guidance on emerging auditing, financial reporting and ethical areas
- Specialist audit software is used to deliver maximum efficiencies



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