



PUBLIC SECTOR

Wiltshire County Council

Progress report to the Final
Accounts & Audit
Committee

December 2007

AUDIT

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External auditors do not act as a substitute for the audited body's own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

If you have any concerns or are dissatisfied with any part of KPMG's work, in the first instance you should contact Chris Wilson, who is the engagement partner to the Council, telephone 0118 964 2238 email christopher.wilson@kpmg.co.uk who will try to resolve your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with your response please contact Trevor Rees on 0161 246 4000, email trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk who is the national contact partner for all of KPMG's work with the Audit Commission. After this, if you still dissatisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can access the Audit Commission's complaints procedure. Put your complaint in writing to the Complaints Investigation Officer, Audit Commission, Nicholson House, Lime Kiln Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8SU or by e mail to: complaints@audit-commission.gov.uk. Their telephone number is 044 798 3131, textphone (minicom) 020 7630 0421.

Summary of progress – 2007/08 audit

The Audit Commission appointed KPMG as the Council’s external auditor from the 2007/08 year of accounts, commencing on 1st April 2007. Since our appointment, we have undertaken our audit risk assessment in order to understand the key risks and issues facing the Council, and how these impact on our audit responsibilities. This work informed the development of our first audit plan, which we presented to the September 2007 meeting of the Final Accounts & Audit Committee.

Our emphasis to date has been on audit planning and developing our knowledge on the Council. We have generally held back from commencing our detailed work whilst the District Auditor saw through his remaining audit work. Now this is nearing completion, we are starting to engage more fully with the Council in order to schedule and commence the key elements of our audit programme for 2007/08. The table below summarises our progress to date.

Table 1 – Summary of audit progress since last meeting

Audit area	Commentary	Next steps
Financial statements		
Accounts audit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interim audit ● Final accounts audit 	<p>We have held preliminary planning discussions with finance staff covering the key stages of our financial statements audit. From this, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● agreed the timing of, and approach to, our audit visits; ● highlighted and discussed a number of changes affecting this year’s financial statements; and ● discussed and agreed our detailed working paper requirements for the final accounts audit. <p>We have also developed a joint working protocol to guide our planned reliance on the work of the Council’s internal auditors. This predominantly covers the audit of core financial systems, and seeks to avoid unnecessary duplication between internal and external audit work programmes. We have agreed this protocol with the Chief Auditor.</p>	<p>We commence our interim audit visit in March 2008.</p>
Use of resources		
Use of Resources scored judgements and data quality audit	<p>The District Auditor is responsible for undertaking the 2007 UoR and data quality audits and will report the outcomes of this work separately.</p> <p>We have held preliminary discussions with Council staff regarding the 2008 UoR review, which will form part of our 2008/09 audit.</p>	<p>We will co-ordinate the timing of our 2008 UoR work so that it is linked effectively with our interim and final accounts audits.</p>
Review of Business Continuity	<p>We met with the Council’s business continuity lead in November to agree the objectives and approach for this review.</p>	<p>Our fieldwork commenced in December. Once completed, we will discuss our draft findings and conclusions with the Council.</p>
Local Area Agreements	<p>We met with the Assistant Director (Performance & Review) in September to discuss the approach to this work. We agreed to defer any detailed work given the changes taking place nationally to the LAA regime, so that our review can be designed to maximise value for the Council moving forward.</p>	<p>We will clarify the audit approach with the Assistant Director (P&R) and agree a suitable timescale for this review.</p>