

London Borough of Merton Pension Fund

Audit Results Report - ISA (UK and Ireland) 260
for the year ended 31 March 2016

August 2016

Ernst & Young LLP



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In April 2015 Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) issued “Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies 2015-16”. It is available from the Chief Executive of each audited body and via the PSAA website (www.psa.co.uk)

The Statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between appointed auditors and audited bodies. It summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies begin and end, and what is to be expected of the audited body in certain areas.

The ‘Terms of Appointment from 1 April 2015’ issued by PSAA sets out additional requirements that auditors must comply with, over and above those set out in the National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and statute, and covers matters of practice and procedure which are of a recurring nature.

This Audit Results Report is prepared in the context of the Statement of responsibilities. This report is intended solely for the use of the Members of the audited body. We, as appointed auditor, take no responsibility to any third party.

Our Complaints Procedure – If at any time you would like to discuss with us how our service to you could be improved, or if you are dissatisfied with the service you are receiving, you may take the issue up with your usual partner or director contact. If you prefer an alternative route, please contact Steve Varley, our Managing Partner, 1 More London Place, London SE1 2AF. We undertake to look into any complaint carefully and promptly and to do all we can to explain the position to you. Should you remain dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, you may of course take matters up with our professional institute. We can provide further information on how you may contact our professional institute.

1. Executive summary

The National Audit Office's Code of Audit Practice (the Code) requires us to report to those charged with governance – the Standards and General Purposes Committee – on the work we have carried out to discharge our statutory audit responsibilities together with any governance issues identified. This report summarises the findings from the 2015/16 audit. We will also share the findings of our work with the Pension Fund Advisory Committee.

Below are the results and conclusions on the significant areas of the audit process.

Status of the audit	<p>We report progress on our audit of the financial statements of Merton Pension Fund for the year ended 31 March 2016. A number of detailed work areas remain in progress at 30 August 2016. We will provide a verbal update on progress on outstanding work areas at the 8 September 2016 meeting of the Standards and General Purposes Committee. As at 30 August 2016 we have also not yet received a draft of the Pension Fund annual report.</p> <p>Based on the work undertaken to date we anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion on the Fund's financial statements. This is subject to the completion of our outstanding work.</p>
Audit differences	<p>There are no unadjusted or adjusted audit differences based on the work completed to date that we wish to bring to your attention.</p>
Scope and materiality	<p>In our Audit Plan presented at the 30 June Standards and General Purposes Committee meeting, we communicated that our audit procedures would be performed using a materiality of £5.42 million. We have reassessed this based on the actual results for the financial year and have decreased this amount to £5.30 million based on the reduced level of net assets reported in the financial statements compared to the prior year.</p> <p>The threshold for reporting audit differences which impact the financial statements has also decreased from £271,000 to £265,000. The basis of our assessment is 1% of net assets, which has remained consistent with prior years.</p> <p>We carried out our work in accordance with our Audit Plan subject to the outstanding areas of work as at 30 August 2016.</p>
Significant audit risks	<p>We identified the risk of management override during the planning phase of our audit, which we reported to you in our Audit Plan.</p> <p>The 'addressing audit risks' section of this report sets out how we have gained audit assurance over this.</p>
Other reporting issues	<p>There is one matter that we bring to your attention in the 'other matters' section of this report below.</p>
Control observations	<p>We have adopted a fully substantive approach and have therefore not tested the operation of controls.</p>

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Pension Fund's staff for their assistance during the course of our work.

Melissa Hargreaves

Executive Director
For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

2. Responsibilities and purpose of our work

The Council's responsibilities

The London Borough of Merton as the administering authority of the Pension Fund is responsible for preparing and publishing its Statement of Accounts which includes the financial statements of the Pension Fund.

The Council is also required to prepare a separate Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Pension Fund

Purpose of our work

Our audit was designed to:

- Express an opinion on the 2015/2016 financial statements of the Pension Fund.
- Report on whether information in the Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

In addition, this report contains our findings related to the areas of audit emphasis and any views on significant deficiencies in internal control or the Pension Fund's accounting policies and key judgments.

3. Financial statements audit

Addressing audit risks

We identified the following audit risks during the planning phase of our audit, and reported these to you in our Audit Plan. Here, we set out how we have gained audit assurance over those issues.

A significant audit risk in the context of the audit of the financial statements is an inherent risk with both a higher likelihood of occurrence and a higher magnitude of effect should it occur and which requires special audit consideration. For significant risks, we obtain an understanding of the entity's controls relevant to each risk and assess the design and implementation of the relevant controls.

Significant Risks (including fraud risks)	Audit procedures performed	Assurance gained and issues arising
<p>Risk of management override</p> <p>As identified in ISA (UK and Ireland) 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. We identify and respond to this fraud risk on every audit engagement.</p>	<p>Our approach focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • testing the appropriateness of journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements; • reviewing accounting estimates for evidence of management bias; and • evaluating the business rationale for significant unusual transactions 	<p>As at 30 August 2016 we have completed part of our planned programme of work in this area, although our work to test journals remains in progress. We have identified no evidence of management override or bias.</p> <p>We have also identified no significant unusual transactions in the course of our work undertaken to date.</p>

Other matters

As required by ISA (UK&I) 260 and other ISAs specifying communication requirements, we are required to communicate to you significant findings from the audit and other matters that are significant to you oversight of the Council's financial reporting process, including the following:

- Qualitative aspects of your accounting practices; estimates and disclosures;
- Matters specifically required by other auditing standards to be communicated to those charged with governance. For example, issues about fraud, compliance with laws and regulations, external confirmations and related party transactions;
- Any significant difficulties encountered during the audit; and
- Other audit matters of governance interest

There is one matter which we wish to draw to your attention. We experienced delays in responses to queries arising throughout the course of the audit. This has been some improvement at the post-statement stage of the audit. It is important that this improvement is maintained for 2016/17 and all associated parties are aware of the shortened deadlines.

Control themes and observations

It is the responsibility of the Council to develop and implement systems of internal financial control and to put in place proper arrangements to monitor their adequacy and effectiveness in practice. Our responsibility as your auditor is to consider whether the Council has put adequate arrangements in place to satisfy itself that the systems of internal financial control are both adequate and effective in practice.

We have adopted a fully substantive approach and have therefore not tested the operation of controls.

Request for written representations

We have requested a management representation letter to gain management's confirmation in relation to a number of matters, as outlined in Appendix F. At this stage we are not expecting to request any non-standard representations.

Other matters to bring to your attention

There are no other matters which we wish to bring to your attention subsequent to the completion of our outstanding work.

Appendix A – Uncorrected audit differences

There are no uncorrected misstatements greater than our nominal amount of £265,000 subject to completion of our outstanding work.

Appendix B – Corrected audit differences

A number of corrections to the financial statements have been made a result of our audit. There are no corrections which we specifically wish to draw to your attention subject to the completion of our outstanding work.

Appendix C – Independence

We confirm there are no changes in our assessment of independence since our confirmation in our Audit Plan dated 30 June 2016.

We complied with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors and the requirements of the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA)'s Terms of Appointment. In our professional judgement the firm is independent and the objectivity of the audit engagement partner and audit staff has not been compromised within the meaning of regulatory and professional requirements.

We confirm that we are not aware of any relationships that may affect the independence and objectivity of the firm that we are required by auditing and ethical standards to report to you.

We consider that our independence in this context is a matter that should be reviewed by both you and ourselves. It is therefore important that you consider the facts of which you are aware and come to a view. If you wish to discuss any matters concerning our independence, we will be pleased to do so at the forthcoming meeting of the Standards and General Purposes Committee on 8 September 2016.

We confirm that we have met the reporting requirements to the Audit Committee, as 'those charged with governance' under International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) 260 – Communication with those charged with governance. Our communication plan to meet these requirements was set out in our Audit Plan of 30 June 2016.

Appendix D – Auditor fees

The table below sets out the scale fee and our final proposed audit fees.

Description	Proposed final Fee 2015/16 £	Scale Fee 2015/16 £
Total Audit Fee – Code work	21,000	21,000

Our actual fee is in line with the scale fee set by the PSAA at this point in time, subject to satisfactory clearance of the outstanding work.

We confirm we have not undertaken any non-audit work outside of the PSAA's requirements.

Appendix E – Draft audit report

Independent auditor's report to the members of London Borough of Merton

Opinion on the pension fund financial statements

We have audited the pension fund financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The pension fund financial statements comprise the Fund Account, the Net Assets Statement and the related notes 1 to 22. 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 2015/16.

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

Respective responsibilities of the Director of Corporate Services and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities set out on pages 151 to 152, the Director of Corporate Services is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts, which includes the pension fund 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 2015/16, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the fund's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Director of Corporate Services; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Statement of Accounts 2015/16 to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the pension fund financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of the pension fund during the year ended 31 March 2016 and the amount and disposition of the fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2016; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.

Opinion on other matters

In our opinion, the information given in the [*to be updated with the actual name of the annual report when received*] for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Melissa Hargreaves

for and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP, Appointed Auditor

Manchester

Xx September 2016

Appendix F – Draft management representation letter

[Date]

Melissa Hargreaves
Ernst & Young
100 Barbirolli Square
Manchester
M2 3EY

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of name of pension fund (“the Pension Fund”) for the year ended 31 March 2016. We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether, the financial statements show a true and fair view of the financial transactions of the Pension Fund during the year ended 31 March 2016, and of the amount and disposition at the end of the year of its assets and liabilities, in accordance with applicable law and CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.

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

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

A. Financial Statements and Financial Records

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16 and for keeping records in respect of contributions received in respect of active members of the Pension Fund and for making accurate representations to you.
2. We confirm that the Pension Fund is a Registered Pension Fund. We are not aware of any reason why the tax status of the Pension Fund should change.
3. We acknowledge, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the financial statements referred to above show a true and fair view of the financial position and the financial performance of the Pension Fund in accordance with Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16, and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the financial statements.
4. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.
5. We believe that the Pension Fund has a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority

Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16 that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

There are no unadjusted audit differences identified during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented.

B. Fraud

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
2. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
3. We have disclosed to you all significant facts relating to any frauds, suspected frauds or allegations of fraud known to us that may have affected the Pension Fund (regardless of the source or form and including, without limitation, allegations by “whistle-blowers”), whether involving management or employees who have significant roles in internal control. Similarly, we have disclosed to you our knowledge of frauds or suspected frauds affecting the Pension Fund involving others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements. We have also disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others, that could affect the financial statements.

C. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

1. We have disclosed to you all known actual or suspected noncompliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.
2. We have not made any reports to The Pensions Regulator, nor are we aware of any such reports having been made by any of our advisors.
3. We confirm that we are not aware of any breaches of the Payment Schedule/Schedule of Contributions or any other matters that have arisen which we considered reporting to the Pensions Regulator.
4. There have been no other communications with The Pensions Regulator or other regulatory bodies during the Pension Fund year or subsequently concerning matters of non-compliance with any legal duty. We have drawn to your attention all correspondence and notes of meetings with regulators.

D. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions

1. We have provided you with:
 - Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters as agreed in terms of the audit engagement.
 - Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit.
 - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
2. You have been informed of all changes to the Pension Fund rules.
3. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

4. We have made available to you all minutes of the Audit Committee and Pension Fund Advisory Committee (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on the following date [*list date*].
5. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Pension Fund's related parties and all related parties and related party transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.
6. We have disclosed to you, and the Pension Fund has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.
7. No transactions have been made which are not in the interests of the Pension Fund members or the Pension Fund during the Scheme year or subsequently.

E. Liabilities and Contingencies

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

F. Subsequent Events

1. There have been no events subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

G. Advisory Reports

1. We have not commissioned advisory reports except for give details which may affect the conduct of your work in relation to the Pension Fund's financial statements and schedule of contributions/payment schedule.

H. Independence

1. We confirm that no trustee of the Scheme is connected with, or is an associate of, Ernst & Young LLP which would render Ernst & Young LLP ineligible to act as auditor to the Scheme.

I. Derivative Financial Instruments

1. We confirm that the Pension Fund has made no direct investment in derivative financial instruments.

J. Actuarial valuation

1. The latest report of the actuary Barnett Waddingham LLP as at 31 March 2016 has been provided to you. To the best of our knowledge and belief we confirm that the information

supplied by us to the actuary was true and that no significant information was omitted which may have a bearing on his report.

K. Accounting Estimates

1. We believe that the significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
2. Accounting estimates recognised or disclosed in the financial statements:
 - We believe the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, we used in determining accounting estimates is appropriate and the application of these processes is consistent.
 - The disclosures relating to accounting estimates are complete and appropriate in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.
 - The assumptions we used in making accounting estimates appropriately reflects our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity, where relevant to the accounting estimates and disclosures.
 - No subsequent event requires an adjustment to the accounting estimates and disclosures included in the financial statements.

M Investment managers' control reports ISAE 3402

1. The latest reports available do not all cover the whole of the 2015/16 audit year. We can confirm that we are not aware of any issues at the respective investment managers that indicate a reduction in control procedures.

Yours Faithfully,

Caroline Holland

Director of Corporate Services

I confirm that this letter has been discussed and agreed at the Standards and General Purposes Committee on 8 September 2016

Cllr Peter McCabe

Chair, Standards and General Purposes Committee

Appendix G – Required communications with the Standards and General Purposes Committee

There are certain communications that we must provide to the Audit Committee of UK clients. These are detailed here:

Required communication	Reference
<p>Planning and audit approach</p> <p>Communication of the planned scope and timing of the audit, including any limitations.</p>	Audit Plan
<p>Significant findings from the audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures ▶ Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit ▶ Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management ▶ Written representations that we are seeking ▶ Expected modifications to the audit report ▶ Other matters if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process 	Audit Results Report
<p>Going concern</p> <p>Events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty ▶ Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements ▶ The adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements 	No conditions or events were identified, either individually or in aggregate, that indicated there could be doubt about the Pension Fund's ability to continue as a going concern for the 12 months from the date of our report.
<p>Misstatements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion ▶ The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods ▶ A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected ▶ In writing, corrected misstatements that are significant 	Audit Results Report
<p>Fraud</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enquiries of the audit committee to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity ▶ Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that a fraud may exist ▶ A discussion of any other matters related to fraud 	We have made enquiries of management. We have not become aware of any fraud or illegal acts during our audit.
<p>Related parties</p> <p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity's related parties including, when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Non-disclosure by management ▶ Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions ▶ Disagreement over disclosures ▶ Non-compliance with laws and regulations ▶ Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity 	We have not identified matters we wish to report.

Required communication	Reference
<p>External confirmations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Management's refusal for us to request confirmations ▶ Inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures 	<p>We have received all requested confirmations.</p>
<p>Consideration of laws and regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Audit findings regarding non-compliance where the non-compliance is material and believed to be intentional. This communication is subject to compliance with legislation on tipping off ▶ Enquiry of the audit committee into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that the audit committee may be aware of 	<p>We have not identified any material instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.</p>
<p>Independence</p> <p>Communication of all significant facts and matters that bear on EY's objectivity and independence</p> <p>Communication of key elements of the audit engagement partner's consideration of independence and objectivity such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The principal threats ▶ Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness ▶ An overall assessment of threats and safeguards ▶ Information about the general policies and process within the firm to maintain objectivity and independence 	<p>Audit Plan and Audit Results Report</p>
<p>Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>Fee Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Breakdown of fee information at the agreement of the initial audit plan ▶ Breakdown of fee information at the completion of the audit 	<p>Audit Plan Audit Results Report</p>

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