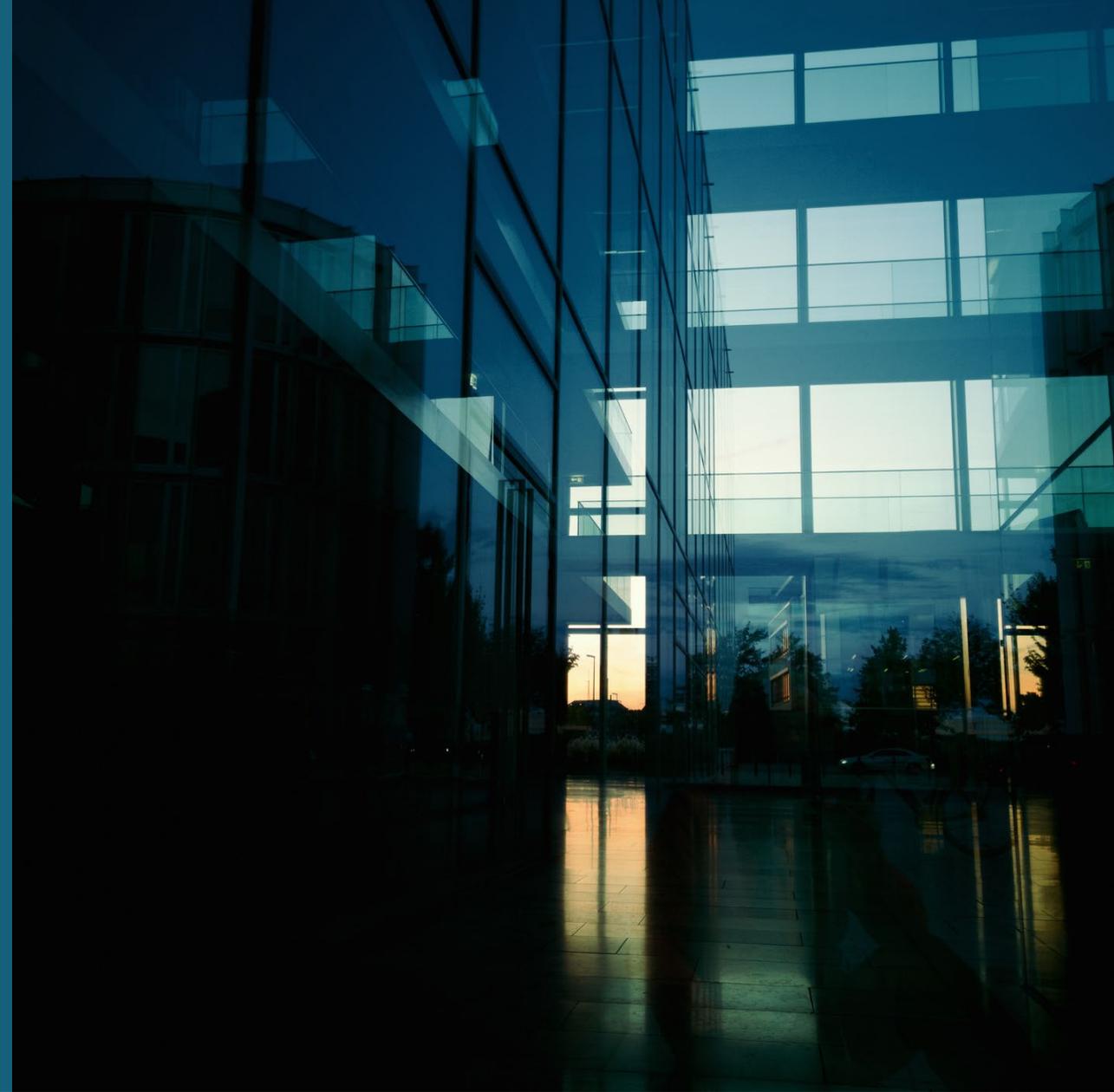


# Audit Completion Report

Boston Borough Council – Year ended 31  
March 2021

March 2022



# Contents

- 01** Executive summary
- 02** Status of the audit
- 03** Audit approach
- 04** Significant findings
- 05** Internal control recommendations
- 06** Summary of misstatements
- 07** Value for Money

Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Appendix B: Draft audit report

Appendix C: Independence

Appendix D: Other communications

Our reports are prepared in the context of the 'Statement of Responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies' and the 'Appointing Person Terms of Appointment' issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Reports and letters prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to the Council are prepared for the sole use of the Council and we take no responsibility to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party. Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an international advisory and accountancy group. Mazars LLP is registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Audit and Governance Committee  
Boston Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
West Street  
Boston  
Lincolnshire  
PE21 8QR

9 March 2022

Dear Committee Members

## **Audit Completion Report – Year ended 31 March 2021**

We are pleased to present our Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2021. The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit conclusions.

The scope of our work, including identified significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement, was outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum which we presented on 29 March 2021. We have reviewed our Audit Strategy Memorandum and concluded that the original significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement remain appropriate.

We would like to express our thanks for the assistance of your team during our audit.

If you would like to discuss any matters in more detail then please do not hesitate to contact me at [mark.SurrIDGE@mazars.co.uk](mailto:mark.SurrIDGE@mazars.co.uk).

Yours faithfully



Mark SurrIDGE

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# 01

Section 01:

**Executive summary**

# 1. Executive summary

## Principal conclusions and significant findings

The detailed scope of our work as your appointed auditor for 2020/21 is set out in the National Audit Office's (NAO) Code of Audit Practice. Our responsibilities and powers are derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and, as outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, our audit has been conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and means we focus on audit risks that we have assessed as resulting in a higher risk of material misstatement.

In section 4 of this report we have set out our conclusions and significant findings from our audit. This section includes our conclusions on the audit risks and areas of management judgement in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, which include:

- Management override of controls;
- Net defined benefit liability valuation;
- Valuation of land and buildings; and
- Covid-19 grant recognition.

Section 5 sets out internal control recommendations and section 6 sets out audit misstatements; unadjusted misstatements have a net impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account £110k additional expenditure. Section 7 outlines our work on the Council's arrangements to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

## Status and audit opinion

We have substantially completed our audit in respect of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. At the time of preparing this report, there are a small number of areas where work is still in progress and these are summarised at Section 2. We will provide an update to you in relation to the matters identified at Section 2 as outstanding through issuance of a follow up letter.

Subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the remaining audit work, we have the following conclusions:



### Audit opinion

We anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion, without modification, on the financial statements. Our proposed audit opinion is included in the draft auditor's report in Appendix B.



### Value for Money

Our Value for Money work remains in progress and the results of this will be reported within our Annual Report later in the year. At this stage we have not identified any significant weaknesses in relation to the arrangements that the Council has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Further detail on our Value for Money work is provided in section 7 of this report.



### Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

We have not yet received group instructions from the National Audit Office in respect of our work on the Council's WGA submission. We are unable to commence our work in this area until such instructions have been received.



### Wider powers

The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and to consider any objection made to the accounts. No such correspondence from electors has been received.

Executive summary

Status of audit

Audit approach

Significant findings

Internal control recommendations

Summary of misstatements

Value for Money

Appendices

# 02

Section 02:

**Status of the audit**

# 2. Status of the audit

Our work is substantially complete and there are currently no matters of which we are aware that would require further modification of our audit opinion, subject to the outstanding matters detailed below.

Audit area	Status	Description of the outstanding matters
Property, plant and equipment		We are awaiting residual evidence from management to support valuation inputs and judgements by the Council's external valuation expert on our samples selected for testing.
Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)		NAO Group Instructions for local authority audits are not yet available and WGA returns and audit certificates cannot be issued at the present time. We provide more information on this matter at page 16.
Audit Quality Control and Completion Procedures		Our audit work is undergoing final stages of review by the Engagement Lead and further quality and compliance checks. In addition, there are residual procedures to complete, including updating post balance sheet event considerations to the point of issuing the opinion and obtaining final management representations.

-  Likely to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements.
-  Potential to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements.
-  Not considered likely to result in material adjustment or change to disclosures within the financial statements.

We will provide the Audit and Governance Committee with an update in relation to these outstanding matters in a follow-up letter, prior to signing the auditor's report.



# 03

Section 03:

**Audit approach**

# 3. Audit approach

## Changes to our audit approach

We provided details of our intended audit approach in our Audit Strategy Memorandum in February 2021. We have not made any changes to our audit approach since we presented our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

## Materiality

Our provisional materiality at the planning stage of the audit was set at £950k using a benchmark of 2% of gross operating expenditure. Our final assessment of materiality, based on the final financial statements is £880k using the same benchmark.

## Use of experts

In our Audit Strategy Memorandum we identified the following experts planned to be used by management in preparing the financial statements, and by ourselves in carrying out our audit. There are no changes to the planned approach or matters arising to report.

Item of account	Management's expert	Our expert
Property, plant and equipment	Kier Services <i>The Council's external valuer.</i>	Not applicable
Pensions	Barnett Waddingham <i>Actuary for Lincolnshire Pension Fund</i>	PwC LLP <i>Consulting actuary appointed by the NAO</i>
Financial instrument disclosures	Link Asset Services <i>Treasury management advisors</i>	Not applicable
Business Rates Appeals valuation	Inform CPI Ltd <i>The Council's rating specialist</i>	Not applicable



# 3. Audit approach (continued)

## Service organisations

In our Audit Strategy Memorandum we identified the following relevant service organisations used by the Council and our planned audit approach. There are no changes to the planned approach or matters arising to report.

Items of account	Service organisation	Audit approach
Pensions	Lincolnshire Pension Fund <i>The IAS 19 pension entries that form part of the Council's financial statements are material and are derived from actuarial valuations. The process of obtaining these is co-ordinated by and uses information held and processed by the service organisation.</i>	We planned to review the controls operating at the Council over these transactions to gain an understanding of the services provided by the service organisation.  Where we conclude that we do not have a sufficient understanding of the services provided by the service organisation we will seek to obtain assurance by using another auditor to perform procedures that will provide the necessary information about relevant controls at the service organisation.

Items of account	Service organisation	Audit approach
Payroll	North Kesteven District Council <i>The payroll entries that form part of the Council's financial statements are material and are derived from the processing of monthly payrolls. The payroll processing is undertaken and administered by North Kesteven District Council on behalf of the Council.</i>	We planned to review the controls operating at the Council over these transactions to gain an understanding of the services provided by the service organisation.  We expect to be able to conclude that the Council has sufficient controls in place over the services provided by the payroll bureau and that we will be able to audit payroll based on the records held at the entity.



# 04

## Section 04: **Significant findings**

# 4. Significant findings

In this section we outline the significant findings from our audit. These findings include:

- our audit conclusions regarding other significant risks and key areas of management judgement outlined in the Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- our comments in respect of the accounting policies and disclosures that you have adopted in the financial statements. On page 16 we have concluded whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework and commented on any significant accounting policy changes that have been made during the year;
- any further significant matters discussed with management;
- any significant difficulties we experienced during the audit; and
- modifications required to our audit report.

## Significant risks

As part of our planning procedures we considered the risks of material misstatement in the Council’s financial statements that required special audit consideration. Although we report identified significant risks at the planning stage of the audit in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, our risk assessment is a continuous process and we regularly consider whether new significant risks have arisen and how we intend to respond to these risks. No new risks have been identified since we issued our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

Management override of controls	Description of the risk
	<p>In all entities, management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, we consider there to be a risk of material misstatement due to fraud and thus a significant risk on all audits.</p>
	<p><b>How we addressed this risk</b></p> <p>We addressed this risk through performing audit work over accounting estimates, journal entries and significant transactions outside the normal course of business or otherwise unusual.</p>
	<p><b>Audit conclusion</b></p> <p>Our audit procedures have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements, or other matters that we wish to bring to Members’ attention in relation to management override of controls.</p>



## 4. Significant findings (continued)

<b>Net defined benefit pension liability valuation</b>	<p><b>Description of the risk</b></p> <p>The defined benefit liability relating to the Local Government pension scheme represents a significant balance on the Council's balance sheet.</p> <p>The Council uses an actuary to provide an annual valuation of these liabilities in line with the requirements of IAS 19 Employee Benefits.</p> <p>Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with this valuation, we determined there was a significant risk in this area.</p> <hr/> <p><b>How we addressed this risk</b></p> <p>To address this risk we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically assessed the competency, objectivity and independence of the Lincolnshire Pension Fund's Actuary, Barnett Waddingham LLP;</li> <li>• Liaised with the auditors of the Lincolnshire Pension Fund to gain assurance that the controls in place at the Pension Fund are operating effectively. This included the processes and controls in place to ensure data provided to the Actuary by the Pension Fund for the purposes of the IAS 19 valuation was complete and accurate;</li> <li>• Reviewed the appropriateness of the Pension Asset and Liability valuation methodologies applied by the Pension Fund Actuary, and the key assumptions included within the valuation. This included comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information provided the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office;</li> <li>• Agreed the data in the IAS 19 valuation report provided by the Fund Actuary for accounting purposes to the pension accounting entries and disclosures in the Council's financial statements; and</li> <li>• Confirmed that no material uncertainties over asset valuations were noted for 2020/21.</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Audit conclusion</b></p> <p>Our audit procedures identified a single material error in the financial statements, arising from matters reported by the external auditors of the Lincolnshire Pension Fund in respect of revised pension asset values. The impact of this error, which management have corrected is reported on page 24.</p> <p>There are no other matters that we wish to bring to Members' attention in relation to the valuation of the Council's net defined pension liability.</p>
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<b>Valuation of property, plant, equipment (land and buildings) and investment properties</b>	<p><b>Description of the risk</b></p> <p>The Council's accounts contain material balances and disclosures relating to its holding of property, plant and equipment (land and buildings) and investment properties with the majority required to be carried at valuation.</p> <p>The valuation of these assets is complex and is subject to a number of management assumptions and judgements.</p> <p>Due to high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with those held at valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.</p> <hr/> <p><b>How we addressed this risk</b></p> <p>To address this risk we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically assessed the Council's valuer's scope of work, qualifications, objectivity and independence to carry out the required programme of revaluations;</li> <li>• Considered whether the overall revaluation methodologies used by the Council's valuer's are in line with industry practice, the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's accounting policies;</li> <li>• Assessed whether valuation movements are in line with market expectations by considering valuation trends;</li> <li>• Assessed the approach that the Council adopts to ensure that assets that are not subject to revaluation in 2020/21 are materially correct, including considering the robustness of that approach in light of the valuation information reported by the Council's valuers; and</li> <li>• Confirmed that that no material uncertainties over asset valuations were noted for 2020/21.</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Audit conclusion</b></p> <p>We experienced some delays in receiving sufficient and appropriate evidence to support the valuer's judgements and are finalising our sample testing of valuations and completing our testing in relation to the significant audit risk identified.</p> <p>As in the previous year the Council's valuer initially reported their valuations on the basis of a 'material uncertainty' existing at the balance sheet date. This was contrary to the latest guidance issued by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and following subsequent discussions with the Council and valuer revised valuation reports were issued with this uncertainty removed.</p>
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# 4. Significant findings (continued)

<b>Covid-19 grant recognition</b>	<b>Description of the risk</b> Throughout 2020/21, the Government has provided substantial sums of financial support to local authorities. A lack of clarity exists in respect of the expected accounting treatment over this income source. We therefore identified the completeness and accuracy of the this income as a risk.
	<b>How our audit addressed this risk</b> To address this risk we have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewed the Council's approach in determining whether grants are or are not ringfenced for specified areas of expenditure;</li><li>• Tested grant income recorded in the ledger to grant allocations/notifications; and</li><li>• Reviewed a sample of grants to ensure conditions to recognise the income in 2020/21 have or have not been met.</li></ul>
	<b>Audit conclusion</b> Our work has identified the incorrect treatment of a number of these grants, with the Council accounting for them on a principal rather than agency basis.  This has resulted in a material error in the financial statements being identified, which management have corrected. The impact of this error, which management have corrected is reported on page 24.



## 4. Significant findings (continued)

### Qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Council's accounting policies and disclosures and concluded they generally comply with the 2020/21 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, appropriately tailored to the Council's circumstances.

A single exception in the application of these policies by the Council has been noted, in that it has failed to effect the necessary transfer of the difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation between the Revaluation Reserve and the Capital Adjustment Account. This has principally arisen due the Council failing to maintain an appropriate asset register to enable the amount of this transfer to be readily calculated. We have therefore reported a deficiency in internal control in respect of this matter within Section 5.

We have subsequently agreed a methodology with the Council to enable the amount of this transfer to be calculated and have recorded the impact of this error, which management have corrected, on page 25. This has resulted in both a prior period adjustment being needed in addition to an in year adjustment.

We also note that the Council has again departed from MHCLG's Statutory Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision in respect of its property fund assets. Whilst we are satisfied that the Council's rationale for this departure is reasonable and that its provision is prudent, we are aware that this is still an area or focus by MHCLG, CIPFA and the National Audit Office.

Draft accounts were received from the Council on 16 August 2021 and were of a reasonable quality although these were not supported by good quality working papers.

### Significant matters discussed with management

Significant matters discussed with management during our audit and which had implications for our audit testing and reporting included:

- The on-going impact of Covid-19 on the Council's business, including any potential impact on risks of material misstatement.  
This included the disclosures required regarding the key sources of estimation uncertainty that management has made in preparing the Statement of Accounts. The Council's valuer initially reported their valuations on the basis of a 'material uncertainty' over the valuation of land and buildings and assets held for sale existing at the balance sheet date. As detailed on page 14, this was contrary to the latest guidance issued by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and, following subsequent discussions with the Council and valuer, revised valuation reports were issued with this uncertainty removed.

### Significant difficulties during the audit

During the course of the audit a number of significant difficulties were encountered, as outlined below, although we have had the full co-operation of management in resolving these:

- Early commencement of audit  
At the request of the S151 Officer the commencement date of our audit was brought forward from that originally planned to enable work to be completed prior to the departure of the principal officer responsible for the production of the financial statements.

No draft accounts or working papers of a suitable quality were produced to support the audit in this period, despite repeated management assurances that they would be made available, resulting in the decision to suspend the audit with a lack of any meaningful progress being made.

- Poor quality working papers  
The Council's finance team experienced turnover of several key posts during the accounts production timeframe. This resulted in a loss of detailed knowledge over particular aspects of the accounts production and ledger processes and increased time pressures on remaining staff over this period.

Our audit has identified that the standard of the working papers provided to support the figures within the financial statements fell below our expectations. Examples include missing information, incorrect interpretation and application of guidance and incorrect population of supporting models, all resulting in incorrect disclosure of financial statement figures and additional time being required to resolve issues.

- Significant delays in management providing required information  
We have faced a number of significant delays in the provision of requested information from management during the course of the audit, in some cases this taking in excess of a month to receive. As a consequence the audit has progressed at a far slower pace than envisaged.

We have therefore reported a deficiency in internal control in respect of the latter two matters within Section 5.

We continue to work with management to complete any remaining audit work and resolve audit queries and are grateful for the co-operation and support provided.

Executive summary

Status of audit

Audit approach

Significant findings

Internal control  
recommendations

Summary of  
misstatements

Value for Money

Appendices

## 4. Significant findings (continued)

### Audit fees

As set out in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, we identified the need for a variation to the published scale fee to take account of several matters. Our current estimate is set out below:

- Additional testing as a result of changes arising from increased audit quality expectations involving the work on the valuation of land and buildings and on the local government pension scheme – £6,194.
- Additional testing as a result of the implementation of new auditing standards: ISA 220 (Revised): Quality control of an audit of financial statements; ISA 540 (Revised): Auditing accounting estimates and related disclosures; ISA570 (Revised) Going Concern; and ISA 600 (Revised): Specific considerations – audit of group financial statements – £2,892.
- Additional work as a result of the material valuation uncertainty declared by the Council's valuer – £876.
- Additional work in respect of Covid-19 grant income recognition – £3,180.
- Additional work as a result of the new Code of Audit Practice and VFM reporting – ongoing with our estimate being at least £9,293 depending on the extent of any risks of significant weaknesses requiring additional work.
- Additional costs incurred as a result of initial aborted audit – £3,489.
- Additional work in respect of errors identified in the difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation – £2,633.
- Additional costs incurred as a result of the significant delays in the provision of requested information – £6,660.
- We will agree the final fee, and any further variations, with management prior to reporting to the Audit and Governance Committee.

### Wider responsibilities

Our powers and responsibilities under the 2014 Act are broad and include the ability to:

- issue a report in the public interest;
- make statutory recommendations that must be considered and responded to publicly;
- apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law; and
- issue an advisory notice under schedule 8 of the 2014 Act.

We have not exercised any of these powers as part of our 2020/21 audit.

The 2014 Act also gives rights to local electors and other parties, such as the right to ask questions of the auditor and the right to make an objection to an item of account. No such objections have been raised.

### Possible delay in the audit certificate

The issue of the Audit Certificate confirms that we have discharged all of our audit responsibilities and that the audit is formally 'closed'. The Audit Certificate would normally be published in our Auditor's Report on the Statement of Accounts. We expect to issue the audit report but delay the issue of the Audit Certificate until the following procedures are complete:

- Value for Money - We are yet to complete our work in respect of the Council's arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2021 and expect to report our findings in the 2020/21 Auditor's Annual Report within 3 months of giving our audit opinion. At the time of preparing this report, we have not identified any significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements that require us to make a recommendation.
- Whole of Government Accounts - The NAO has not yet issued its Group Instructions for local authority audits.

We will update the Audit Committee when more information is known but at this stage the draft Auditor's Report at Appendix B assumes that we are not able to issue the Audit Certificate at this stage.

# 05

Section 05:

**Internal control recommendations**

# 5. Internal control recommendations

The purpose of our audit was to express an opinion on the financial statements. As part of our audit we have considered the internal controls in place relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures to allow us to express an opinion on the financial statements but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control or to identify any significant deficiencies in their design or operation.

The matters reported are limited to those deficiencies and other control recommendations that we have identified during our normal audit procedures and that we consider to be of sufficient importance to merit being reported. If we had performed more extensive procedures on internal control we might have identified more deficiencies to be reported or concluded that some of the reported deficiencies need not in fact have been reported. Our comments should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all deficiencies that may exist or improvements that could be made.

Our findings and recommendations are set out below. We have assigned priority rankings to each of them to reflect the importance that we consider each poses to your organisation and, hence, our recommendation in terms of the urgency of required action. In summary, the matters arising fall into the following categories:

Priority ranking	Description	Number of issues
<b>1 (high)</b>	In our view, there is potential for financial loss, damage to reputation or loss of information. This may have implications for the achievement of business strategic objectives. The recommendation should be taken into consideration by management immediately.	3
<b>2 (medium)</b>	In our view, there is a need to strengthen internal control or enhance business efficiency. The recommendations should be actioned in the near future.	1
<b>3 (low)</b>	In our view, internal control should be strengthened in these additional areas when practicable.	0



# 5. Internal control recommendations (continued)

## Significant deficiencies in internal control – Level 1

### Description of deficiency

Failure to maintain an appropriate asset register

The Council has failed to maintain an asset register that records all the information necessary for it to calculate all of its required financial statement entries, specifically it does not hold historical cost information..

### Potential effects

The Revaluation Reserve and Capital Adjustment Account may be materially misstated as a result of the inability of the Council to calculate difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation.

### Recommendation

The Council should ensure that a complete and accurate asset register is maintained to ensure that appropriate it is able to correctly calculate all of its required financial statement entries.

### Management response

The asset register has been reviewed and updated for operational PPE during the 2020/21 audit to ensure it contains all of the necessary information required (including historic cost) and to ensure all relevant accounting adjustments are made each year end. This will be updated to include all other categories of assets in preparation for the 2021/22 year end process.

### Description of deficiency

Production of draft accounts and working papers

The Council's finance team experienced turnover of several key posts during the accounts production timeframe. This resulted in a loss of detailed knowledge over particular aspects of the accounts production and ledger processes and increased time pressures on staff over this period.

Our audit has identified that the standard of the working papers provided to support the figures within the financial statements fell below the standard we would expect to see, and significant delays have been encountered in the provision of required information by management.

### Potential effects

Poor quality working papers can lead to inefficiencies for both the Council and auditors, as staff time is required to investigate, discuss and resolve issues and may, in certain circumstances, lead to delays in the audit timescales.

### Recommendation

It is important that the Council takes the steps necessary to re-establish robust arrangements and staffing to support the 2021/22 year-end. Quality control procedures in respect of the accounts preparation process need to be strengthened and the Council, in its closedown procedures, should include sufficient time for a robust quality control process to be implemented.

### Management response

Robust working papers are in the process of being set up for 2021/22 in preparation for year end. Finance Officers are being provided with training in preparation for year end, which includes detailing the requirements for detailed working papers, a thorough review process will take place on all working papers to ensure compliance with Code of Practice accounting requirements, and compliance with external audit evidence requirements. This will also enable prompt responses to be provided to audit queries from 2021/22 onwards.



# 5. Internal control recommendations (continued)

## Significant deficiencies in internal control – Level 1 (continued)

### Description of deficiency

#### Maintenance of property asset information

Our testing of the Council’s property assets has confirmed that it has not maintained an accurate database of its portfolio of assets, specifically the floor areas of buildings. As the floor areas of buildings are utilised by the valuer in some of their valuations it is essential that such records are maintained to ensure accurate valuations are undertaken and reported at each year end.

### Potential effects

The Council’s property valuations may be materially misstated within the financial statements as a result of inaccurate floor areas being used in valuations.

### Recommendation

The Council should ensure that complete and accurate records are maintained in respect of its property assets to ensure appropriate valuations are able to be undertaken.

### Management response

Floor area measurements have been revisited by Property within Boston Borough Council as part of the revised revaluation exercise for 2020/21. We will ensure that Property maintain accurate records, along with evidence for these, to enable accurate asset valuations at the year end.

## Significant deficiencies in internal control – Level 2

### Description of deficiency

#### Expected Credit Loss Model

Our review of the Council’s debt impairment calculations have confirmed that these are not in accordance with its stated accounting policy which establishes the use of the expected credit loss model as required under IFRS 9 and the CIPFA Code.

### Potential effects

The Council is failing to comply with the requirements of current accounting standards and the CIPFA Code. This may lead to the incorrect debt impairment figure being calculated and disclosed within the financial statements.

### Recommendation

The Council should review its approach to the calculation of its debt impairment to ensure that this accords with the requirements of IFRS 9 and the CIPFA Code.

### Management response

During the 2021/22 year end process, we will ensure that the Council’s debts are reviewed for impairment in line with the expected credit loss model, as required under IFRS9 and the CIPFA Code.



# 5. Internal control recommendations (continued)

## Follow up on previous internal control points

### Description of deficiency

#### Maintenance of property asset information

Our testing of the Council's property assets has confirmed that it has not maintained an accurate database of its portfolio of assets, specifically the floor areas of buildings. As the floor areas of buildings are utilised by the valuer in some of their valuations it is essential that such records are maintained to ensure accurate valuations are undertaken and reported at each year end.

### Potential effects

The Council's property valuations may be materially misstated within the financial statements as a result of inaccurate floor areas being used in valuations.

### Recommendation

The Council should ensure that complete and accurate records are maintained in respect of its property assets to ensure appropriate valuations are able to be undertaken.

### 2020/21 update

Our work in the current year has identified that little action has been taken in respect of this recommendation. As a consequence we have repeated this recommendation for the current year.

### Description of deficiency

#### Loan confirmations

Our testing of the Council's loans balances has confirmed that it does not have relevant contact details for the provider of one of its loans. As these details are required to effectively monitor and control the Council's liability it is essential that such details are obtained and maintained over the lifetime of its obligation.

### Potential effects

The Council's may not be able to effectively service its contractual obligations in respect of it loans balances.

### Recommendation

The Council should ensure that complete and accurate records are maintained in respect of its loans balances to ensure appropriate communications and debt servicing are able to be undertaken.

### 2020/21 update

The Council has now obtain relevant contact details and has been able to facilitate the provision of a satisfactory loan confirmation for both the 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021.



# 5. Internal control recommendations (continued)

## Follow up on previous internal control points (continued)

### Description of deficiency

#### Expected Credit Loss Model

Our review of the Council’s debt impairment calculations have confirmed that these are not in accordance with its stated accounting policy which establishes the use of the expected credit loss model as required under IFRS 9 and the CIPFA Code.

### Potential effects

The Council is failing to comply with the requirements of current accounting standards and the CIPFA Code. This may lead to the incorrect debt impairment figure being calculated and disclosed within the financial statements.

### Recommendation

The Council should review its approach to the calculation of its debt impairment to ensure that this accords with the requirements of IFRS 9 and the CIPFA Code.

### 2020/21 update

Our work in the current year has identified that little action has been taken in respect of this recommendation. As a consequence we have repeated this recommendation for the current year.



# 06

Section 06:

## **Summary of misstatements**

## 6. Summary of misstatements

This section outlines the misstatements identified during the course of the audit, above the trivial threshold for adjustment of £26,000. The first table outlines the misstatements that were identified during the course of our audit which management has assessed as not being material either individually or in aggregate to the financial statements and does not currently plan to adjust.

The second table outlines the misstatements that have been adjusted by management during the course of the audit.

### Unadjusted misstatements

		Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)	Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)
1	Dr: BS – Debtors Dr: MiRS - Adjustments Cr: CIES – Taxation and non-specific grant income (Gross income) Cr: BS – Creditors Cr: BS – Unusable reserves (Collection fund adjustment account)	90	(4)	90	(86) (90)
Incorrect application of model for the calculation of NNDR bad debt provision. This error also has consequential implications for the Cash Flow Statement, Note 7 in respect of the Expenditure and Funding Analysis, Note 9 in respect of Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations, Note 10 in respect of Earmarked Reserves, Note 13 in respect of Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income, Note 14 in respect of Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature, Note 24 in respect of Creditors, Note 25 in respect of Provisions, Note 27 in respect of Unusable Reserves, Notes 28 and 30 in respect of the Cash Flow, Note 35 in respect of Grant Income and the Collection Fund and related notes.					
2	Dr: BS – Provisions Dr: MiRS - Adjustments Cr: CIES – Taxation and non-specific grant income (Gross income) Cr: BS – Creditors Cr: BS – Unusable reserves (Collection fund adjustment account)	26	(2)	26	(24) (26)
Incorrect calculation of the amount to be provided for business rate appeals. This error also has consequential implications for the Cash Flow Statement, Note 7 in respect of the Expenditure and Funding Analysis, Note 9 in respect of Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations, Note 10 in respect of Earmarked Reserves, Note 13 in respect of Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income, Note 14 in respect of Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature, Note 21 in respect of Debtors, Note 24 in respect of Creditors, Note 27 in respect of Unusable Reserves, Notes 28 and 30 in respect of the Cash Flow, Note 35 in respect of Grant Income and the Collection Fund and related notes.					
<b>Total unadjusted misstatements</b>		116	(6)	116	(226)

Executive summary

Status of audit

Audit approach

Significant findings

Internal control recommendations

Summary of misstatements

Value for Money

Appendices

## 6. Summary of misstatements

### Adjusted misstatements

		Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)	Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)
1	Dr: CIES – Chief Finance Officer (Gross income) Cr: CIES – Chief Finance Officer (Gross expenditure)	20,801	(20,801)		
Incorrect treatment of Covid-19 grants on a principal rather than agent basis. This error also has consequential implications for Note 14 in respect of Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature and Note 35 in respect of Grant Income.					
2	Dr: BS – Pensions liability Cr: BS – Unusable reserves (Pensions reserve)			1,146	(1,146)
Revision to IAS 19 liability following receipt of an updated report to take account of revised pension fund asset valuations. This error also has consequential implications for the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Note 27 in respect of Unusable Reserves and Note 30 in respect of Defined Benefit Pension Schemes.					
3	Dr: CIES – Head of Operations (Gross expenditure) Dr: BS – Unusable reserves (Revaluation reserve) Dr: PY BS – Unusable reserves (Revaluation reserve) * Cr: MiRS – Adjustments (General Fund) Cr: BS – Unusable reserves (Capital adjustment account) Cr: PY BS – Unusable reserves (Capital adjustment account) *	5	(5)	1,068 9,106	(1,068) (9,106)
Failure to transfer the difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation between reserves. This error also has consequential implications for the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Cash Flow Statement, Note 7 in respect of the Expenditure and Funding Analysis, Note 9 in respect of Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations, Note 14 in respect of Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature and Note 27 in respect of Unusable Reserves.					
<b>Total adjusted misstatements</b>		<b>20,806</b>	<b>(20,806)</b>	<b>11,320</b>	<b>(11,320)</b>

\* - These adjustments have been effected through a Prior Period Adjustment to the respective reserve balances as at 1 April 2020.

Executive summary

Status of audit

Audit approach

Significant findings

Internal control  
recommendations

Summary of  
misstatements

Value for Money

Appendices

# 6. Summary of misstatements

## Disclosure amendments

In addition to the above numerical errors that relate directly to the primary statements or their related notes, our audit also identified a small number of errors and adjustments in relation to other disclosures. These have been discussed with management who have agreed to the amendments and include:

- Note 1 Accounting policies : Minor inconsistencies in disclosure in comparison to Code requirements;
- Note 4 Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty : Incorrect inclusion of material valuation uncertainty disclosures in respect of property, plant and equipment and pension fund property investment assets;
- Note 15 Revenue from contracts with service recipients: No requirement for note;
- Note 16 Property, plant and equipment : Incorrect disclosure of revaluation date;
- Note 19 Financial instruments : Incorrect extraction of figures for financial instruments;
- Note 25 Provisions : Incorrect analysis of in-year movements;
- Notes 29 and 30 Cash flow : Incorrect extraction of figures for movements in short and long term investments and incorrect disclosure of amounts in relation to major preceptors & NNDR;
- Note 33 Officers' remuneration : Incorrect extraction of figures for salary costs and omission of compensation payments for loss of office;
- Note 38 Leases : Note not in accordance with the disclosure requirements; and
- Note 40 Defined benefit pension schemes : Incorrect disclosure of pension asset values.



# 07

Section 07:

**Value for Money**

# 7. Value for Money

## Approach to Value for Money

We are required to consider whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out and sets out the reporting criteria that we are required to consider. The reporting criteria are:

- **Financial sustainability** - How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services
- **Governance** - How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks
- **Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness** - How the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services

At the planning stage of the audit, we undertake work to understand the arrangements that the Council has in place under each of the reporting criteria and we identify risks of significant weaknesses in those arrangements. Although we describe this work as planning work, we keep our understanding of arrangements under review and update our risk assessment throughout the audit to reflect emerging issues that may suggest significant weaknesses in arrangements exist.

We are still undertaking our work in this area although at this stage we have not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements.

Where our risk-based procedures identify actual significant weaknesses in arrangements we are required to report these and make recommendations for improvement. Where such significant weaknesses are identified, we report these in the audit report.

The primary output of our work on the Council's arrangements is the commentary on those arrangements that forms part of the Auditor's Annual Report. We intend to issue the Auditor's Annual Report in April 2022.

## Status of our work

We are yet to complete our work in respect of the Council's arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2021. At the time of preparing this report, we have not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements that require us to make a recommendation, however we continue to undertake work on the Council's arrangements.

Our draft audit report at Appendix B outlines that we have not yet completed our work in relation to the Council's arrangements. As noted above, our commentary on the Council's arrangements will be provided in the Auditor's Annual Report expected to be in April 2022.



# Appendices

A: Draft management representation letter

B: Draft audit report

C: Independence

D: Other communications

# Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Mazars LLP  
2 Chamberlain Square  
Birmingham  
B3 3AX

xx March 2022

Dear Sirs

### **Boston Borough Council - audit for year ended 31 March 2021**

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Boston Borough Council (the Council) for the year ended 31 March 2021 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21 (the Code) and applicable law.

I confirm that the following representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy ourselves that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

### **My responsibility for the financial statements and accounting information**

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

### **My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information**

I 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 material;
- Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- Unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.



# Appendix A: Draft management representation letter (continued)

I confirm as Chief Finance Officer that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information.

As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

### Accounting records

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and committee meetings, have been made available to you.

### Accounting policies

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with the Code and International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

### Accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value

I confirm that any significant assumptions used by the Council in making accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are reasonable.

I confirm that I am satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme liabilities for IAS19 disclosures are consistent with my knowledge. I confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. I confirm that all significant retirement benefits have been identified and properly accounted for (including any arrangements that are statutory, contractual or implicit in the employer's actions, that arise in the UK or overseas, that are funded or unfunded).



# Appendix A: Draft management representation letter (continued)

### Contingencies

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
- the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

### Laws and regulations

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

### Fraud and error

I acknowledge my responsibility as Chief Finance Officer for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

I have disclosed to you:

- All the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;



# Appendix A: Draft management representation letter (continued)

- All knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
  - management and those charged with governance;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
  - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council’s financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

### Related party transactions

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances, have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed to you in accordance with the requirements of the Code and applicable law.

I have disclosed the identity of the Council’s related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

### Impairment review

To the best of my knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there is a permanent reduction in the recoverable amount of the property, plant and equipment and intangible assets below their carrying value at the balance sheet date. I have considered the impact of Covid-19 on the Council’s Investment Properties. An impairment review is therefore not considered necessary.

### Charges on assets

All the Council’s assets are free from any charges exercisable by third parties except as disclosed within the financial statements.

### Future commitments

I am not aware of any plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

### Subsequent events

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements, and for which the Code and applicable law require adjustment or disclosure, have been adjusted or disclosed.

Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly.



# Appendix A: Draft management representation letter (continued)

### Covid-19

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the on-going impact of the Covid-19 Virus pandemic on the Council, including the impact of mitigation measures and uncertainties, and that the disclosure in the Statement of Accounts fairly reflects that assessment.

### Brexit

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, including the potential outcomes at the end of the Implementation Period, and that the disclosure in the Statement of Accounts fairly reflects that assessment.

### Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council will not continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the accounts.

I have updated our going concern assessment in light of the on-going Covid-19 pandemic. I continue to believe that the Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the Council's needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

### Annual Governance Statement

I am satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and I confirm that I am not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

### Narrative report

The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect my understanding of the Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.



# Appendix A: Draft management representation letter (continued)

**Unadjusted misstatements**

I confirm that the effects of the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development



# Appendix B: Draft audit report

## Independent auditor’s report to the members of Boston Borough Council

### Report on the audit of the financial statements

#### Opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Boston Borough Council (“the Council”) for the year ended 31 March 2021, which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund 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 2020/21.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21.

#### 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 section of our report. We are independent of the Council 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Council’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.



# Appendix B: Draft audit report (continued)

## Other information

The Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the 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 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.

## Responsibilities of the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development’s Responsibilities, the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development 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 2020/21, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development is also responsible for such internal control as the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis on the assumption that the functions of the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.



# Appendix B: Draft audit report (continued)

## 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Based on our understanding of the Council we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the Local Government Act 2003 (and associated regulations made under section 21), the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (and associated regulations made under section 32) and the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended) and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements.

We evaluated the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development’s incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to those identified risks, including non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) and fraud that are material to the financial statements. Our audit procedures included but were not limited to:

- discussing with management and the Audit and Governance Committee the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the Council which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- making enquiries of management and the Audit and Governance Committee on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.



# Appendix B: Draft audit report (continued)

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management and the Audit and Governance Committee. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

We are also required to conclude on whether the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. We performed our work in accordance with Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statement and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, and Supplementary Guidance Note 01, issued by the National Audit Office in April 2021.

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](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

## Report on the Council’s arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

### Matter on which we are required to report by exception

We are required to report to you if, in our view we are not satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2021.

We have nothing to report in this respect.

### Responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure 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 arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We are required under section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council 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 Council’s arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in April 2021.



# Appendix B: Draft audit report (continued)

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

## Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of Boston Borough Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 44 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 the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed:

- the work necessary to issue our assurance statement in respect of the Council's Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack;
- the work necessary to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Mark Surridge, Key Audit Partner  
For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

2 Chamberlain Square  
Birmingham  
B3 3AX

xx March 2022



# Appendix C: Independence

As part of our ongoing risk assessment we monitor our relationships with you to identify any new actual or perceived threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We can confirm that no new threats to independence have been identified since issuing the Audit Strategy Memorandum and therefore we remain independent.



# Appendix D: Other communications

Other communication	Response
<b>Compliance with Laws and Regulations</b>	<p>We have not identified any significant matters involving actual or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations. Or detail significant matters identified.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management that all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements have been disclosed.</p>
<b>External confirmations</b>	<p>We did not experience any issues with respect to obtaining external confirmations.</p>
<b>Related parties</b>	<p>We did not identify any significant matters relating to the audit of related parties.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management confirming that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. they have disclosed to us the identity of related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which they are aware; and</li> <li>b. they have appropriately accounted for and disclosed such relationships and transactions in accordance with the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework.</li> </ul>
<b>Going Concern</b>	<p>We have not identified any evidence to cause us to disagree with the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development that Boston Borough Council will be a going concern, and therefore we consider that the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation of the financial statements.</p>



# Appendix D: Other communications

Other communication	Response
<p><b>Subsequent events</b></p>	<p>We are required to obtain evidence about whether events occurring between the date of the financial statements and the date of the auditor's report that require adjustment of, or disclosure in, the financial statements are appropriately reflected in those financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management that all events occurring subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the applicable financial reporting framework requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.</p>
<p><b>Matters related to fraud</b></p>	<p>We have designed our audit approach to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud. In addition to the work performed by us, we will obtain written representations from management, and the Audit and Governance Committee, confirming that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. they acknowledge their responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud;</li> <li>b. they have disclosed to the auditor the results of management's assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;</li> <li>c. they have disclosed to the auditor their knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the entity involving:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Management;</li> <li>ii. Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or</li> <li>iii. Others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. they have disclosed to the auditor their knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.</li> </ul>



# Mark Surridge, Director – Public and Social Sector

[mark.surridge@mazars.co.uk](mailto:mark.surridge@mazars.co.uk)

## **Mazars**

2 Chamberlain Square  
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Mazars is an internationally integrated partnership, specialising in audit, accountancy, advisory, tax and legal services\*. Operating in over 90 countries and territories around the world, we draw on the expertise of 40,400 professionals – 24,400 in Mazars' integrated partnership and 16,000 via the Mazars North America Alliance – to assist clients of all sizes at every stage in their development.

\*where permitted under applicable country laws.