

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru
Auditor General for Wales



WALES **AUDIT** OFFICE
SWYDDFA **ARCHWILIO** CYMRU

Audit of Financial Statements Report

Gwynedd Pension Fund

Audit year: 2013-14

Issued: September 2014

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Status of report

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The team who delivered the work comprised Derwyn Owen, Amanda Hughes, Alan Hughes, Helen Howard and Simon Monkhouse

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Summary report

Introduction

1. The Appointed Auditor is responsible for providing an opinion on whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Gwynedd Pension Fund at 31 March 2014 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.
2. We do not try to obtain absolute assurance that the financial statements are correctly stated, but adopt the concept of materiality. In planning and conducting the audit, we seek to identify material misstatements in your financial statements, namely, those that might result in a reader of the accounts being misled.
3. The quantitative level at which we judge such misstatements to be material for Gwynedd Pension Fund is £13.095 million. Whether an item is judged to be material can also be affected by certain qualitative issues such as legal and regulatory requirements and political sensitivity.
4. International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 260 requires us to report certain matters arising from the audit of the financial statements to those charged with governance of a body in sufficient time to enable appropriate action.
5. This report sets out for consideration the matters arising from the audit of the financial statements of Gwynedd Pension Fund, for 2013-14, that require reporting under ISA 260.

Status of the audit

6. We received the draft financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2014 on 30 June 2014, the agreed deadline, and have now substantially completed the audit work.
7. We are reporting to you the more significant issues arising from the audit, which we believe you must consider prior to approval of the financial statements. The audit team has already discussed these issues with Dafydd Edwards, Head of Finance.

Proposed audit report

8. **It is the Appointed Auditor's intention to issue an unqualified audit report on the financial statements** once you have provided us with a Letter of Representation based on that set out in [Appendix 1](#).
9. The proposed audit report is set out in [Appendix 2](#).

Significant issues arising from the audit

Uncorrected misstatements

10. There are no misstatements identified in the financial statements, which remain uncorrected.

Corrected misstatements

11. There were two amendments that have been corrected by management. ,.

Other significant issues arising from the audit

12. In the course of the audit, we consider a number of matters both qualitative and quantitative relating to the accounts and report any significant issues arising to you.

We have identified one weakness in your internal controls.

13. As we identified during the 2012-13 financial audit, membership records held in the pensions administration system are not up to date. It is the responsibility of the Employer bodies to notify the administering authority of changes in the status of members eg, starters and leavers, etc. Whilst, in the case of the smaller admitted bodies within the scheme records are generally up to date, for the three main employer bodies, namely Gwynedd Council, Anglesey County Council and Conwy County Borough Council, it is apparent that this is not the case, albeit for different reasons.
14. One consequence of this is that data provided to the actuary, to provide the triennial actuarial valuation and the annual IAS 19 pension disclosures for inclusion in the respective employer bodies' financial statements, may not be accurate.
15. It is essential that the Council, in its role as the administering authority for the Gwynedd Local Government Pension Scheme, continues to work with Employer bodies to ensure that the data is brought up to date and subsequently maintained.
16. In 2013-14, an associated issue has arisen, in that since July it has been necessary for the Actuary to re-issue the pension disclosure IAS19 reports for some employers. The first re-issue was as a result of it being identified, following queries from another Council's auditors, that the Actuary had double counted some of the obligations relating to the former Gwynedd County Council (which affected Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd Council and Conwy County Borough Council). The second re-issue was because we identified that Gwynedd Council's contributions information provided to the Actuary included the contributions for the GwE Joint committee, which produces a separate report and accounts. The administering authority needs to ensure that it provides the correct information to the Actuary.

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- 17.** Other than the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits being disclosed in note 19, it is worth noting that these issues do not directly impact on the financial statements of the pension fund.

There are no other matters that we need to report to you

- 18.** There are no other matters to report to you. In particular:
- There were no concerns about the qualitative aspects of your accounting practices and financial reporting.
 - We did not encounter any significant difficulties during the audit.
 - There were no significant matters discussed and corresponded upon with management which we need to report to you.
 - There are no other matters significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process that we need to report to you.
 - There are not any other matters specifically required by auditing standards to be communicated to those charged with governance.

Independence and objectivity

- 19.** As part of the finalisation process, we are required to provide you with representations concerning our independence.
- 20.** We have complied with ethical standards and in our professional judgment, we are independent and our objectivity is not compromised. There are no relationships between the Wales Audit Office and Gwynedd Pension Fund that we consider to bear on our objectivity and independence.

Appendix 1

Final Letter of Representation

[Audited body's letterhead]

Appointed Auditor
Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

25 September 2014

Dear Mr Barrett,

REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING THE 2013/14 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements (including that part of the Remuneration Report that is subject to audit) of Gwynedd Council Pension Fund for the year ended 31 March 2014 for the purpose of expressing an opinion on their truth and fairness and their proper preparation.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made enquiries as we consider sufficient, we can make the following representations to you.

MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIONS

Responsibilities

We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with legislative requirements and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom; in particular the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance therewith.

We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation, maintenance and review of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

Information provided

We have provided you with:

- full access to:
 - all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as books of account and supporting documentation, minutes of meetings and other matters;
 - additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and

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- unrestricted access to staff from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
 - the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
 - our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects Gwynedd Council Pension Fund and involves:
 - management;
 - employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
 - our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others;
 - our knowledge of all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements;
 - the identity of all related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPRESENTATIONS

All transactions, assets and liabilities have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

Significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed.

All events occurring subsequent to the reporting date which require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted for or disclosed.

All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to the auditor and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions. The effects of uncorrected misstatements identified during the audit are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

We are aware of the issues regarding aspects of our pension disclosure IAS19 reports for Fund employers' financial statements. Arrangements have been made during 2014/15 to avoid any repetition in future.

REPRESENTATIONS BY GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S AUDIT COMMITTEE

We acknowledge that the representations made by management, above, have been discussed with us.

We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of true and fair financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The financial statements were approved by Gwynedd Council's Audit Committee on 25 September 2014.

We confirm that we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to you. We confirm that, as far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which you are unaware.

Yours sincerely,

DAFYDD L EDWARDS
HEAD OF FINANCE

COUNCILLOR JOHN PUGHE ROBERTS
AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Date 25 September 2014

Date 25 September 2014.

Appendix 2

Proposed audit report of the Appointed Auditor to Gwynedd Council

Independent auditor's report to the Members of Gwynedd Council

I have audited the accounting statements and related notes of:

- Gwynedd Council; and
- Gwynedd Pension Fund

for the year ended 31 March 2014 under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

Gwynedd Council's accounting statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, and the Cash Flow Statement.

Gwynedd Pension Fund's accounting statements comprise the Fund Account and the Net Assets Statement.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013-14 based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs).

Respective responsibilities of the responsible financial officer and the independent auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts, the responsible financial officer is responsible for the preparation of the statement of accounts, Gwynedd Council's accounting statements, which gives a true and fair view.

My responsibility is to audit the accounting statements and related notes in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the accounting statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the accounting statements and related notes sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the accounting statements and related notes are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to Gwynedd Pension Fund's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the responsible financial officer and the overall presentation of the accounting statements and related notes.

In addition, I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Explanatory Foreword to identify material inconsistencies with the audited accounting statements and related notes and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies, I consider the implications for my report.

Opinion on the accounting statements of Gwynedd Council

In my opinion the accounting statements and related notes:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Gwynedd Council as at 31 March 2014 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013-14.

Opinion on the accounting statements of Gwynedd Pension Fund

In my opinion, the pension fund accounts and related notes:

- give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of Gwynedd Pension Fund during the year ended 31 March 2014 and of the amount and disposition of the fund's assets and liabilities as at that date; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013-14.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, the information contained in the Explanatory Foreword for the financial year for which the accounting statements and related notes are prepared is consistent with the accounting statements and related notes.

Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the Annual Governance Statement on which I report to you if, in my opinion, it does not reflect compliance with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework' published by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit.

Certificate of completion of audit

I certify that I have completed the audit of the accounts of Gwynedd Council in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Auditor General for Wales.

Anthony Barrett
Appointed Auditor
Wales Audit Office
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Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

30 September 2014

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