

Audit Commission Progress Report

Oxford City Council

Audit 2009/10

Date **April 2010**

Contents

Introduction	3
Appendix 1 – Planned outputs	5
The Audit Commission	10

Status of our reports

The Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission explains the respective responsibilities of auditors and of the audited body. Reports prepared by appointed auditors are addressed to non-executive directors/members or officers. They are prepared for the sole use of the audited body. Auditors accept no responsibility to:

- any director/member or officer in their individual capacity; or
 - any third party.
-

Introduction

- 1 Our principal objective as the Council's appointed auditor is to carry out an audit which meets the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice. This report sets out the progress we have made in delivering the work set out in our 2009/10 audit plan.
- 2 Our audit plans set out our proposed plan of work and is based on the Audit Commission's risk-based approach to audit planning. It reflects:
 - Audit and inspection work specified by the Audit Commission;
 - Current national risks relevant to your local circumstances; and
 - Your local risks and improvement priorities.

Our responsibilities

- 3 In carrying out audit work, we comply with the statutory requirements governing it, in particular the:
 - Audit Commission Act 1998
 - Local Government Act 1999 (best value inspection and audit); and
 - Code of Audit Practice (the Code).
- 4 Our audit is also planned to be consistent with the Commission's Strategic Plan.
- 5 The new Audit Commission Code came into effect from April 2005 and has been developed on the basis of the Commission's model of public audit, which defines auditors' responsibilities in relation to:
 - the audited body's financial statements and its statement of internal control; and
 - whether the audited body has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Reporting

- 6 The Audit Commission, as part of its planning process, produced a risk-based audit plan, which is tailored to the individual circumstances of the Council and meets the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice. This includes a use of resources programme which takes account of Audit Commission national requirements and local projects arising from our risk based planning.
- 7 Executive Directors nominate a lead officer and operational manager for each project in the agreed Audit Plan. Lead officers are required to agree the scope of the project, agree the final report and recommendations and ensure these are implemented in accordance with the agreed action plan.
- 8 The Audit Commission will report progress on each project to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee as part of the regular progress report.

- 9 Draft and final reports will be sent to lead officers for comment. The lead officer must respond to the Audit Commission, and where appropriate complete an accompanying action plan, within two weeks of receipt.
- 10 Final audit reports will be reported to the Council's Chief Executive, the Lead Director and the Head of Policy, Performance and Communications prior to reporting to the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 11 A summary of the key findings for each project will be reported in the Annual Audit Letter.

Progress

- 12 Progress to date on our main blocks of work is set out in the attached appendix.

Key contacts

- 13 If you have any concerns on any aspect of the audit then please contact one of our key contacts.

Name	Title
Maria Grindley	District Auditor 0844 798 8952 m-grindley@audit-commission.gov.uk
Alan Witty	Audit Manager 0844 798 8956 a-witty@audit-commission.gov.uk
Clare Buchanan	Local Performance Lead 0844 798 4455 c-buchanan@audit-commission.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Planned outputs

Audit Plan	Work programmed or carried out	Lead officer	Status	Target report date	Draft report date	Final report date
2009/10 Audit						
Audit Plan	Sets out the agreed content and timing of all aspects of the external audit for the financial year 2009/10.	Chief Executive / Head of Performance, Policy and Comms	Fee discussed with Chief Executive prior to presentation to Audit and Governance Committee	March 2009	Letter to Chief Executive March 2009	21 April 2009
Audit Opinion Plan	Sets out in detail our opinion work for financial year 2009/10	Chief Executive / Head of Performance, Policy and Comms	Sent to officers and presented to March Audit Committee.	March 2010	March 2010	April 2010
Annual Audit Letter 2009/10	Draws together the main findings of the audit.	Chief Executive / Head of Performance, Policy and Comms	Not yet due	November 2010		
Opinion						
Interim visit	Assessment of Authority's key financial systems including the evaluation and testing of key	Head of Financial and Asset	Our walk throughs planned will be completed in April 2010	May 2010		

Audit Plan	Work programmed or carried out	Lead officer	Status	Target report date	Draft report date	Final report date
	controls (reliance on internal audit as appropriate).	Management	and specific controls testing will take place in May 2010.			
Final Accounts	Audit of financial statements leading to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● audit opinion on the financial statements. ● assessment whether the Annual Governance Statement has been presented in accordance with relevant requirements. 	Head of Financial and Asset Management	Work to be undertaken from July 2010 with a view to issuing an opinion by 30 September 2010 to meet national deadlines. We are expecting to receive the accounts on 1 July 2010.	September 2010		
Whole of Government accounts	Audit of WGA data returns to ensure consistency with main financial statements.	Head of Financial and Asset Management	Work to be undertaken at same time as final accounts.	1 Oct 2010 to meet national deadlines.		
Arrangements for securing value for money in its use of resources						
Use of Resources	Generic assessment of how well organisations are managing and using the	Head of Policy,	Our fieldwork has been completed by the end	March 2010		

Audit Plan	Work programmed or carried out	Lead officer	Status	Target report date	Draft report date	Final report date
	<p>resources the resources to deliver value for money and better sustainable outcomes for local people consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sound and strategic financial management • strategic commissioning and good governance • management of natural resources, assets and people. 	Performance and Comms Head of Finance	of March 2010 and we have feedback our initial findings to officers on 8 April 2010 who are currently considering their response.			
Data Quality	Overall arrangements covered in Use of Resources but separate data quality spot checks	Head of Policy, Performance and Comms	Work currently being planned.	June 2010		
Management of assets	<p>A review of the management of the Council's assets including a follow-up of the recommendations in our 2007/08 report.</p> <p>The outcome will also help inform the next round of UoR assessments</p>	Head of Policy, Performance and Comms	Fieldwork completed and draft findings with the Council. A meeting has been arranged to discuss the report on 15 April with the aim of getting a finalised report to the Audit and Governance meeting on 27 April 2010.	March 2010		
Follow-up of previous vfm studies	A follow-up of recommendations from previous vfm studies.	Head of Policy, Performance	Work currently being planned and we aim to start the work in July.	Will be reported in annual audit		

Audit Plan	Work programmed or carried out	Lead officer	Status	Target report date	Draft report date	Final report date
		and Comms		letter		
Organisational assessment	Provides focus for continuous improvement and includes UoR assessment plus assessment on managing performance.	Chief Executive Head of Policy, Performance and Comms	Work to be reported in 2009/10 annual audit letter and feeds into the Comprehensive Area Assessment. We are discussing with Officers when would be the best time to complete our managing performance work.	Autumn October 2010		

Grant claims 2009/10							
Grant claim	Details	Key contact	Progress	Council deadline	Received from Council	Audit deadline	Certified by Audit
BEN01	Housing and Council Tax benefits	Pauline Hull	Claim not due yet	31 May 2010		30 November 2010	
HOU01	Housing Subsidy	Cat O'Connor	Claim not due yet	29 September 2010		31 December 2010	
HOU02	Base data return	Cat O'Connor	Claim not due yet	31 August 2010		9 October 2010	
HOU21	Disabled facility grant	Gail Siddal/ John Exeley	Claim not due yet	31 August 2010		31 October 2010	
LA01	NNDR	Adrian Wood	Claim not due yet	27 June 2010		25 September 2010	
CFB06	Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts	Debbie Williams	Claim not due yet	30 June 2010		30 September 2010	

Note:

The above list is where a return is definitely required. Other returns may be relevant to the Council and the Council will need to ensure claims are submitted at the appropriate time. Submission dates quoted are subject to final confirmation from the appropriate government department.

The Audit Commission

The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog, driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local public services to deliver better outcomes for everyone.

Our work across local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services means that we have a unique perspective. We promote value for money for taxpayers, auditing the £200 billion spent by 11,000 local public bodies.

As a force for improvement, we work in partnership to assess local public services and make practical recommendations for promoting a better quality of life for local people.

Copies of this report

If you require further copies of this report, or a copy in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0844 798 7070.

© Audit Commission 2008

For further information on the work of the Commission please contact:

Audit Commission, 1st Floor, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4HQ

Tel: 0844 798 1212 Fax: 0844 798 2945 Textphone (minicom): 0844 798 2946

www.audit-commission.gov.uk
