

# Audit Commission Progress Report

Oxford City Council

**Audit 2010/11**

**Date November 2010**

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## **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.
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# 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 and 2010/11 audit plans.
- 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.

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## 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 March 2010 which sets out our principal objectives are to report on the Council's:
  - financial statements; and
  - arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

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## 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 this 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 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.

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## Progress

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

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## Use of Resources

- 13 Since our last progress report to you the new Government has announced that all work related to CAA will cease with immediate effect and will not be reported on. This includes the use of resources work scoring process however the work we have completed will support our value for money conclusion which still remains as a Code requirement.

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## Key contacts

- 14 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

# Appendix 1 – Planned outputs

Audit Plan	Work programmed or carried out	Lead officer	Status	Target report date	Draft report date	Final report date
<b>2009/10 Audit</b>						
Audit Plan	Sets out the agreed content and timing of all aspects of the external audit for the financial year 2009/10.	Chief Executive	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 and Acting Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	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 and Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	Final draft to be discussed at Audit and Governance Committee.	November 2010	November 2010	
<b>Opinion</b>						
Interim visit	Assessment of Authority's key financial systems including the evaluation and testing of key	Corporate Director Finance &	Complete	May 2010	July 2010	September 2010

<b>Audit Plan</b>	<b>Work programmed or carried out</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Target report date</b>	<b>Draft report date</b>	<b>Final report date</b>
	controls (reliance on internal audit as appropriate).	Efficiency				
Final Accounts	<p>Audit of financial statements leading to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• audit opinion on the financial statements.</li> <li>• assessment whether the Annual Governance Statement has been presented in accordance with relevant requirements.</li> </ul>	Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	Update annual governance report to be presented to Audit and Governance Committee. (AGR)	30 September 2010 for issue of opinion.	September 2010	
Whole of Government accounts	Audit of WGA data returns to ensure consistency with main financial statements.	Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	Complete	1 Oct 2010 to meet national deadlines.	1 October 2010	October 2010

#### **Arrangements for securing value for money in its use of resources**

Use of Resources	<p>Generic assessment of how well organisations are managing and using the resources the resources to deliver value for money and better sustainable outcomes for local people consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sound and strategic financial management</li> <li>• strategic commissioning and good governance</li> </ul>	Chief Executive and Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	We will not be reporting scored assessments. The work will support our vfm conclusion. Key messages will be reported in our annual audit letter.	March 2010	Key messages will be reported in our annual audit letter. (see above for dates)	N/A
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<b>Audit Plan</b>	<b>Work programmed or carried out</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Target report date</b>	<b>Draft report date</b>	<b>Final report date</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>management of natural resources, assets and people.</li> </ul>					
Data Quality	Overall arrangements covered in Use of Resources but separate data quality spot checks	Chief Executive and Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	No further work in this area will be completed.	June 2010	Key messages will be reported in our annual audit letter.	N/A
Management of assets	A review of the management of the Council's assets including a follow-up of the recommendations in our 2007/08 report. The outcome will also help inform the next round of UoR assessments	Chief Executive and Head of Property and Facilities Management.	Report to the Audit and Governance meeting on 27 April 2010.	March 2010	March 2010	April 2010
Follow-up of previous vfm studies	A follow-up of recommendations from previous vfm studies.	Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	Awaiting final responses to actions plans	Will be reported in annual audit letter	November 2010	November 2010
Organisational assessment	Provides focus for continuous improvement and includes UoR assessment plus assessment on managing performance.	Chief Executive and Corporate Director Finance & Efficiency	All work related to CAA has ceased with immediate effect and will not be reported on.	Autumn October 2010	N/A	N/A

<b>Grant claims 2009/10</b>							
<b>Grant claim</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Key contact</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Council deadline</b>	<b>Received from Council</b>	<b>Audit deadline</b>	<b>Certified by Audit</b>
BEN01	Housing and Council Tax benefits	Pauline Hull	Completed	31 May 2010	16 June 2010.	30 November 2010	2 November 2010
HOU01	Housing Subsidy	Jane Rees	Claim received	30 September 2010	30 September 2010	31 December 2010	
HOU02	Base data return	Jane Rees	Completed	31 August 2010	31 August 2010	8 October 2010	21 October 2010
HOU21	Disabled facility grant	Paul Swaffield/ John Exeley	Completed	30 June 2010	28 June 2010	29 October 2010	27 October 2010
LA01	NNDR	Adrian Wood	Completed	25 June 2010	22 June 2010	24 September 2010	23 September 2010
CFB06	Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts	Debbie Williams	Completed	30 June 2010	29 June 2010	30 September 2010	29 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.



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# 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.

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## Copies of this report

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