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Scottish Information
Commissioner

It's public knowledge



Scottish Information Commissioner

Planning report to the Scottish Information Commissioner and
the Auditor General for Scotland
on the 2016/17 audit

3 March 2017

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Director introduction

The key messages in this report

I have pleasure in presenting our planning report to the Scottish Information Commissioner for the 2017 audit. I would like to draw your attention to the key messages of this paper:

Audit quality is our number one priority. We plan our audit to focus on audit quality and have set the following audit quality objectives for this audit:

A robust challenge of the key judgements taken in the preparation of the financial statements.

A strong understanding of your internal control environment.

A well planned and delivered audit that raises findings early with those charged with governance.

Significant financial statement risks

- As with other public sector bodies the Scottish Information Commissioner (SIC) continues to face significant financial challenges. For the period to 31 December 2016, the SIC have reported a surplus of £49k compared to budget. However the year end projection is showing there will be a need to apply for contingency funding in relation to court costs and additional un-budgeted salary costs. Given the pressures across the whole public sector, there is an inherent risk associated with the accuracy and completeness of recording expenditure within this limit, therefore this will be a key focus of our audit.
- As mandated by Auditing Standards, a significant risk has also been identified in relation to management override of controls.
- Under Auditing Standards, there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition. Having considered the risk factors set out in auditing standards and the nature of the revenue streams at the SIC, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted. This is based on the fact that there is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition, the majority of revenue is from the Scottish Parliament which can be agreed to confirmations independently supplied and there is no complexity or judgement.

Audit Dimensions

- The 2016 Code of Audit Practice sets our four audit dimensions which set a common framework for all public sector audits in Scotland. These are financial sustainability, financial management, governance and transparency and value for money. Due to the relative size and simplicity of the functions delivered by the SIC, we have concluded that the full wider scope of audit is not appropriate. In accordance with paragraph 53 of the Code, our work in this area will therefore be restricted to concluding on:
 - the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement; and
 - the financial sustainability of the SIC and the services that it delivers over the medium to longer term.

Other wider scope work

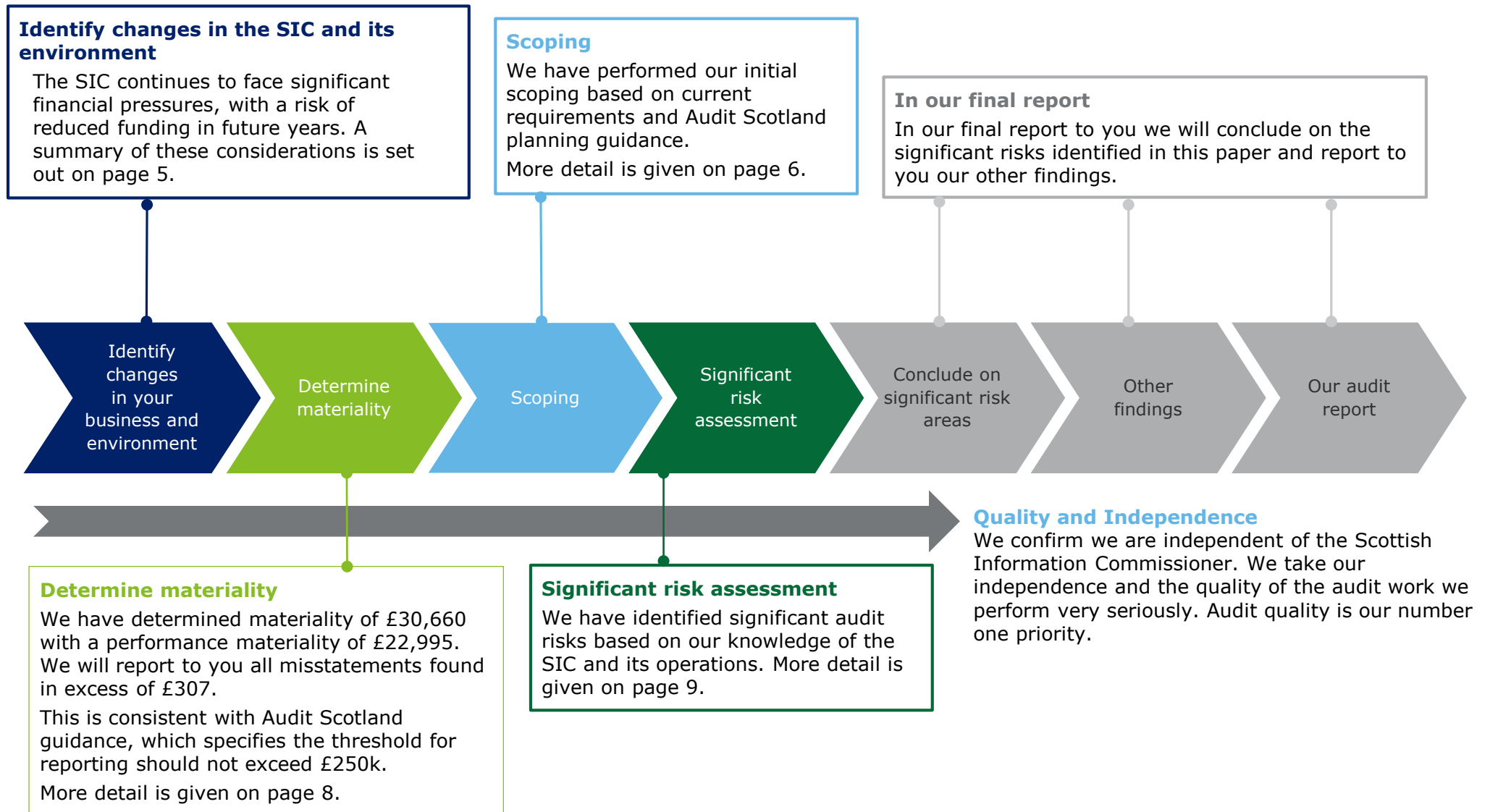
- In accordance with Audit Scotland guidance, we will be requested to provide information to support national performance audits and to inform wider analysis on the follow-up of Role of Boards report.

Our commitment to quality

- We are committed to providing the highest quality audit, sophisticated data analytics and our wealth of experience. Further information is presented on page 22.

Our audit explained

We tailor our audit to your business and your strategy



An audit tailored to you

Focusing on your business and strategy

Impact on our audit

Performance against budget



There is a financial duty for the SIC to maintain its expenditure within the budget approved by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB). As at December 2016, the SIC is reporting a surplus against budget, however the projected year end position is that there will be a need to apply for contingency funding in relation to court costs and additional salary costs. There is a risk that the targets are not met impacting our opinion on regularity. We will evaluate the results of our audit testing in the context of the achievement of these targets.

The SIC must continue to look at how it can reduce costs to meet the challenge of making significant savings per year or secure additional long term funding. We will consider the Commission's financial sustainability in the medium to longer term and consider whether it is planning effectively to continue to deliver its services on a sustainable basis.

Budgeting and contingency funding



The Commissioner receives its funding directly from the SPCB, operating on a cash budget that is approved by the Scottish Parliament. The number of appeals the SIC will receive in any given year is impossible to predict and therefore the budgeting process is made more difficult. The SIC has access to contingency funding from the Scottish Parliament should the level of appeals received in the year be higher than expected.

We will consider the need to apply for contingency funding as the year progresses and assess the likelihood of this being received from the Scottish Parliament.



New significant risk



Continuing significant risk



Normal risk

Scoping

Our key areas of responsibility under the Code of Audit Practice



Core audit

Our core audit work as defined by Audit Scotland comprises:

- providing the **Independent Auditor's Report** on the annual accounts (and any assurance statement on consolidation packs);
- providing the **annual report** on the audit addressed to the SIC and the Auditor General for Scotland;
- communicating **audit plans** to those charged with governance;
- providing **reports to management**, as appropriate, in respect of the auditor's corporate governance responsibilities in the Code (including auditors' involvement in the NFI exercise);
- Preparing and submitting **fraud returns**, including nil returns, to Audit Scotland where appropriate;
- Identifying significant matters arising from the audit, alert the Auditor General for Scotland and support Audit Scotland in producing statutory reports as required; and
- undertaking work requested by Audit Scotland or local performance audit work.

Wider scope requirements

The Code of Audit Practice sets out four audit dimensions which set a common framework for all public sector audits in Scotland:

- **Financial sustainability** – looking forward to the medium and longer term to consider whether the body is planning effectively to continue to deliver its services or the way in which they should be delivered.
- **Financial management** – financial capacity, sound budgetary processes and whether the control environment and internal controls are operating effectively.
- **Governance and transparency** – the effectiveness of scrutiny and governance arrangements, leadership and decision making, and transparent reporting of financial and performance information.
- **Value for money** - using resources effectively and continually improving services.

Due to the relative size and simplicity of the functions delivered by the Scottish Information Commissioner, we have concluded that the full wider scope of audit is not appropriate. In accordance with paragraph 53 of the Code, our work in this area will therefore be restricted to concluding on:

- the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement; and
- The financial sustainability of the SIC and the services that it delivers over the medium to longer term.

Scoping (continued)

Our approach



Approach to controls testing

Our risk assessment procedures will include obtaining an understanding of controls considered to be 'relevant to the audit'. This involves evaluating the design of the controls and determining whether they have been implemented ("D & I").

The results of our work in obtaining an understanding of controls and any subsequent testing of the operational effectiveness of controls will be collated and the impact on the extent of substantive audit testing required will be considered.

Promoting high quality reporting to stakeholders

We view the audit role as going beyond reactively checking compliance with requirements: we seek to provide advice on evolving good practice to promote high quality reporting.

Audit Scotland has published good practice guides in relation to the Annual Report and the Governance Statement to support the SIC in preparing high quality drafts of the Annual Report and financial statements, which we would recommend the SIC consider during drafting.

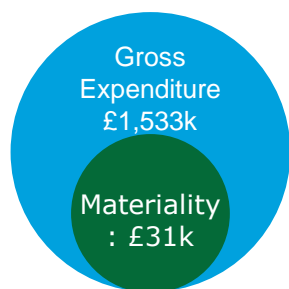


Materiality

Approach to materiality



Basis of materiality – benchmark



- The audit director has determined an estimated materiality as £30,660 and a performance materiality of £22,995, based on professional judgement, the requirements of auditing standards and the financial measures most relevant to users of the financial statements. The estimated materiality is based on prior year expenditure, materiality may be revised as part of year-end testing, depending on current year expenditure
- We have used 2% of forecast gross expenditure as the benchmark for determining materiality.
- Our approach to determining the materiality benchmark is consistent with Audit Scotland guidance which states that the threshold for clearly trivial above which we should accumulate misstatements for reporting and correction to audit committees must not exceed £250,000.

Reporting to those charged with governance

Under the current materiality level based on gross expenditure, we will report to you all misstatements found in excess of £307.

We will report to you misstatements below this threshold if we consider them to be material by nature.

Our audit report

We will:

- Report the materiality benchmark applied in the audit of the SIC;
- Provide comparative data and explain any changes in materiality, compared to prior year, if appropriate; and
- Explain any normalised or adjusted benchmarks we use, if appropriate.

Although materiality is the judgement of the audit director, the Scottish Information Commissioner must satisfy themselves that the level of materiality chosen is appropriate for the scope of the audit.

Significant risks

Core Expenditure Resource Limits

Key focus for management

Nature of risk

Key financial duty for the Scottish Information Commissioner is to comply with the budget approved by the SPCB to cover cash expenditure and non-cash costs such as depreciation. Given the pressures across the whole of the public sector, there is an inherent risk associated with the accuracy and completeness of recording of expenditure as there is an incentive for management to either over or under accrue expenditure at the year-end, depending on the forecast position, in order to meet the allocation.

The key judgement areas, its potential impact on the financial statements and our planned audit challenge

We will evaluate the results of our audit testing in the context of the budget approved by the SPCB. Our work in this area will include the following:

- evaluate the design and implementation of the controls around the monthly monitoring of financial performance and journal entry postings;
- review the projected run rate of expenditure throughout the year to identify the risk of over or under accrual at the year-end to inform focused testing;
- assessing whether expenditure is correctly classified between revenue and capital and whether it has been incurred in accordance with Scottish Government's guidance;
- performing focused cut-off testing;
- reviewing and challenging the assumptions made in estimating key accruals to assess completeness and accuracy of recorded expenditure; and
- obtain independent confirmation of the budget approved by the SPCB.

Deloitte comment

In 2015/16, the SIC remained within its cash target, drawing down £1,561k of the £1,563k allocated.

For 2016/17, as at December 2016, the SIC is reporting a surplus of £49k against budget. We will consider the final position as part of our year end audit procedures.

Management override of controls

We will use computer assisted audit techniques, including Spotlight, to support our work on the risk of management override

Nature of risk

International Standards on Auditing requires auditors to identify a presumed risk of management override of control. This presumed risk cannot be rebutted by the auditor. This recognises that management may be able to override controls that are in place to present inaccurate or even fraudulent financial reports.

The key judgement areas, its potential impact on the financial statements and our planned audit challenge

Our work will focus on:

- the testing of journals, using data analytics to focus our testing on higher risk journals;
- significant accounting estimates, including consideration of provisions and accruals; and
- any unusual transactions or one-off transactions, including those with related parties.

Our wider response to the risk of fraud is set out in the Appendix of this report.

In considering the risk of management override, we will:

- assess the overall position taken in respect of key judgements and estimates;
- consider the sensitivity of the financial statements with respect to the achieving financial performance targets;
- consider remuneration plans and linkage with key management judgements; and
- consider our view on the overall control environment and 'tone at the top'.

Deloitte comment

No testing has been performed to date as we will complete the above as part of our year-end visit.

Wider scope requirements

Audit dimensions

The Code of Audit Practice sets our four audit dimensions which set a common framework for all public sector audits in Scotland. These are financial sustainability, financial management, governance and transparency and value for money. Due to the relative size and simplicity of the functions delivered by the Scottish Information Commissioner, we have concluded that the full wider scope of audit is not appropriate. In accordance with paragraph 53 of the Code, our work in this area will therefore be restricted to concluding following:

Audit dimension	Areas to be considered	Impact on the 2017 Audit
The appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The completeness of the disclosures in meeting the requirements of the essential features as specified in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM).• Inconsistencies between the disclosures or information that is materially incorrect and audit knowledge.	We will review the draft governance statement and assess whether there are any inconsistencies or omissions based on other audit evidence obtained throughout the audit.
Financial sustainability looks forward to the medium and longer term to consider whether the body is planning effectively to continue to deliver its services or the way in which they should be delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The financial planning systems in place across the shorter and longer terms• The arrangements to address any identified funding gaps• The affordability and effectiveness of funding and investment decisions made	We will monitor the Commission's actions in respect of its short, medium and longer term financial plans.

Audit quality

Our commitment to audit quality

Our objective is to deliver a distinctive, quality audit to you. Every member of the engagement team will contribute, to achieve the highest standard of professional excellence.

In particular, for your audit, we consider that the following steps will contribute to the overall quality:

- We will apply professional scepticism on the material issues and significant judgements identified, by using our expertise in the public sector and elsewhere to provide robust challenge to management;
- We will obtain a deep understanding of the SIC, its environment and of your processes in key areas – such as income recognition, payroll expenditure, and capital expenditure - enabling us to develop a risk-focused approach tailored to the SIC;
- Our engagement team is selected to ensure that we have the right subject matter expertise and industry knowledge. We will involve specialists to support the audit team in our work, leading to high quality understanding and challenge; and
- In order to deliver a quality audit to you, each member of the core audit team has received tailored training to develop their expertise in audit skills which includes local Engagement Team Based Learning. This is a partner led programme encouraging teams from across our practice to engage and discuss current sector and audit issues, sharing best practice and expertise. This is in addition to a practice wide health training day held prior to the end of the financial year to share key issues from across the country, to update on regulatory changes and provide early warning of issues other teams may have faced at the interim testing phase.

Engagement Quality Control Review

We have developed a tailored Engagement Quality Control approach. Our dedicated Professional Standards Review (PSR) function will provide a 'hot' review before any audit or other opinion is signed. PSR is operationally independent of the audit team, and supports our high standards of professional scepticism and audit quality by providing a rigorous independent challenge.

Purpose of our report and responsibility statement

Our report is designed to help you meet your governance duties

What we report

Our report is designed to establish our respective responsibilities in relation to the financial statements audit, to agree our audit plan and to take the opportunity to ask you questions at the planning stage of our audit. Our report includes:

- Our audit plan, including key audit judgements and the planned scope;
- Key regulatory and corporate governance updates, relevant to you.

What we don't report

- As you will be aware, our audit is not designed to identify all matters that may be relevant to the Scottish Information Commissioner.
- Also, there will be further information you need to discharge your governance responsibilities, such as matters reported on by management or by other specialist advisers.
- Finally, the views on internal controls and business risk assessment in our final report should not be taken as comprehensive or as an opinion on effectiveness since they will be based solely on the audit procedures performed in the audit of the financial statements and the other procedures performed in fulfilling our audit plan.

Other relevant communications

- This report should be read alongside the supplementary "Briefing on audit matters" circulated alongside this report.
- We will update you if there are any significant changes to the audit plan.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our report with you and receive your feedback.

Deloitte LLP

Chartered Accountants

Glasgow

3 March 2017

This report has been prepared for the Scottish Information Commissioner, as a body, and we therefore accept responsibility to you alone for its contents. We accept no duty, responsibility or liability to any other parties, since this report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose.

Appendices

Fraud responsibilities and representations

Responsibilities explained



Your responsibilities

- The primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with management and those charged with governance, including establishing and maintaining internal controls over the reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Our responsibilities

- We are required to obtain representations from your management regarding internal controls, assessment of risk and any known or suspected fraud or misstatement.
- As auditors, we obtain reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error.
- As set out in the significant risks section of this document, we have identified the risk of fraud in management override of controls as a key audit risk for your organisation.

Fraud characteristics

- Misstatements in the financial statements can arise from either fraud or error. The distinguishing factor between fraud and error is whether the underlying action that results in the misstatement of the financial statements is intentional or unintentional.
- Two types of intentional misstatements are relevant to us as auditors – misstatements resulting from fraudulent financial reporting and misstatements resulting from misappropriation of assets.

We will request the following to be stated in the representation letter signed on behalf of the SIC:

- We acknowledge our responsibilities for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.
- We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- We are not aware of any fraud or suspected fraud / We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the entity or group and involves:
(i) management; (ii) employees who have significant roles in internal control; or (iii) others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Fraud responsibilities and representations (continued)



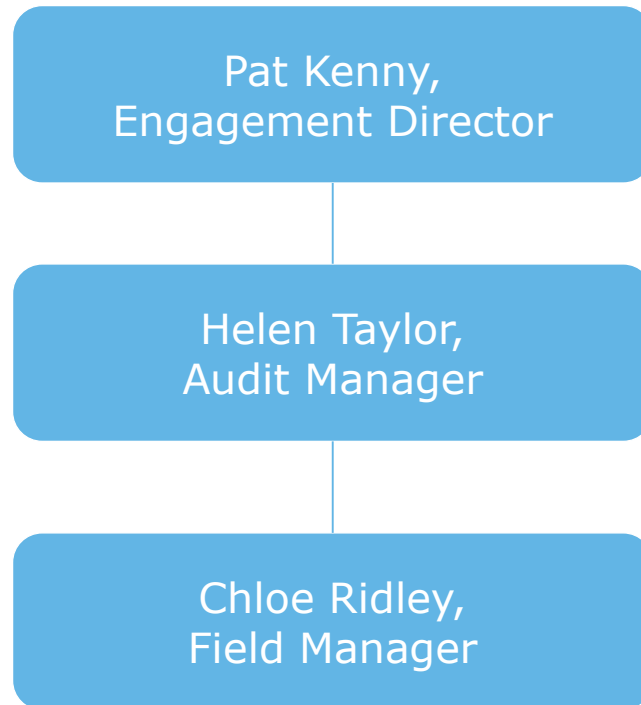
We will make the following inquiries regarding fraud:

Management	Those charged with governance
<p>Management's assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated due to fraud, including the nature, extent and frequency of such assessments.</p> <p>Management's process for identifying and responding to the risks of fraud in the entity.</p> <p>Management's communication, if any, to those charged with governance regarding its processes for identifying and responding to the risks of fraud in the entity.</p> <p>Management's communication, if any, to employees regarding its views on business practices and ethical behaviour.</p> <p>Whether management has knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity.</p> <p>We plan to involve management from outside the finance function in our inquiries.</p>	<p>How those charged with governance exercise oversight of management's processes for identifying and responding to the risks of fraud in the entity and the internal control that management has established to mitigate these risks.</p> <p>Whether those charged with governance have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity.</p> <p>The views of those charged with governance on the most significant fraud risk factors affecting the entity.</p>

Your audit team and timetable

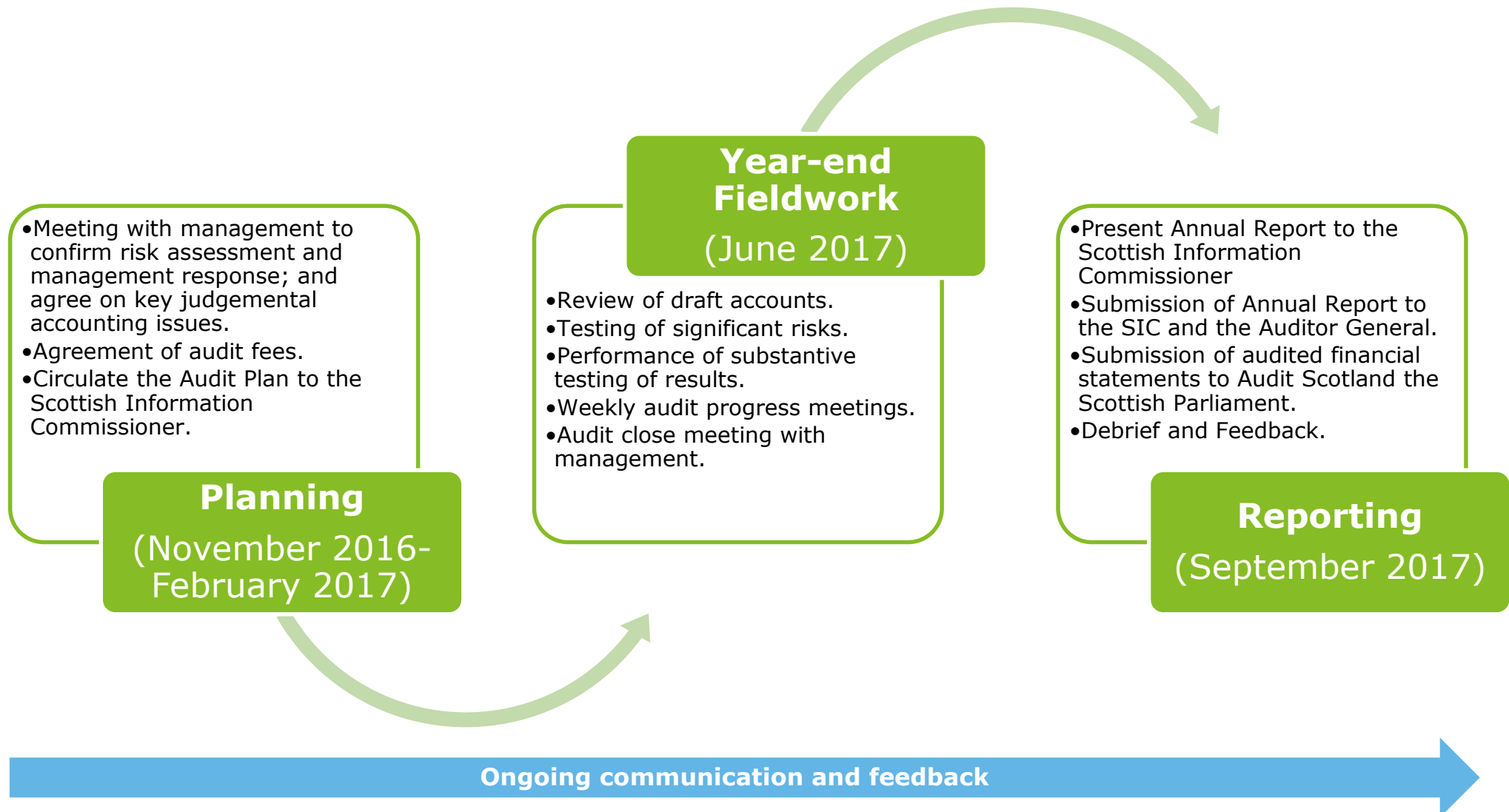
We have a highly experienced audit team

We set out below our audit engagement team. We manage our audit on a basis that it draws on the expertise of our public sector group.



Your audit team and timetable (continued)

Set out below is the approximate expected timing of our reporting and communication with the Scottish Information Commissioner



Independence and fees



As part of our obligations under International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland), we are required to report to you on the matters listed below:

Independence confirmation

We confirm we are independent of the SIC and will reconfirm our independence and objectivity to the Scottish Information Commissioner for the year ending 31 March 2017 in our final report to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Fees

Fee ranges for the 2016/17 audit were provided by Audit Scotland in late December 2016 and we understand you are currently still in discussion with Audit Scotland about this.

We will confirm our fees separately once these discussions have been resolved.

Details of all non-audit services fees for the period will be presented in our final report.

Non-audit services

In our opinion there are no inconsistencies between APB Ethical Standards for Auditors and the company's policy for the supply of non-audit services or any apparent breach of that policy. We continue to review our independence and ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place including, but not limited to, the rotation of senior partners and professional staff and the involvement of additional partners and professional staff to carry out reviews of the work performed and to otherwise advise as necessary.

Our approach to quality

AQR team report and findings

Audit quality and regulation

We pride ourselves on our commitment to quality and our quality control procedures. We have an unyielding pursuit of quality in order to deliver consistent, objective and insightful assurance.

In May 2016 the Financial Reporting Council ("FRC") issued individual reports on each of the six largest firms, including Deloitte, on Audit Quality Inspections which provides a summary of the findings of its Audit Quality Review ("AQR") team for the year ended 31 March 2016. We adopt an open and communicative approach with the regulator and their report is an accurate reflection of our efforts to improve audit quality across our practice over a number of years.

The review performed by the AQR forms an important part of our overall inspection process. We perform causal factor analysis on each significant finding arising from both our own internal quality review and those of our regulators to identify the underlying cause. This then drives our careful consideration of each of the FRC's comments and recommendations, as well as findings arising from our own reviews to provide further impetus to our quality agenda.

18 of the audits reviewed by the AQR were performed to a good standard with limited improvements required and four audits required improvements. No audits were assessed as requiring significant improvements. We have already taken action to respond to the key themes of the report and will continue to undertake further inputs to our audit quality improvement programmes to embed the changes into our practice.

The AQR's conclusion on Deloitte

"We reviewed selected aspects of 22 individual audits in 2015/16. In selecting which aspects of an audit to inspect, we take account of those areas identified to be of higher risk by the auditors and Audit Committees, our knowledge and experience of audits of similar entities and the significance of an area in the context of the audited financial statements.

In response to our last inspection report, the firm has made a number of improvements to its policies and procedures:

- The firm's guidance regarding the testing of journals has been enhanced.
- Additional sector-specific training was provided for individuals involved in financial services audits, together with additional training on internal controls for all audit staff.
- The firm has made a number of improvements to its internal monitoring process, including the development of a moderation process in order to increase consistency.

Our key findings in the current year requiring action by the firm are that the firm should:

- Improve the extent of challenge of management in relation to areas of judgment, in particular for impairment reviews and judgmental valuations.
- Improve aspects of its audit approach in the areas of revenue and inventory.
- Ensure high quality reporting to Audit Committees is achieved on a consistent basis.
- Strengthen its audit approach in relation to defined benefit pension scheme balances and disclosures.
- Strengthen its policies and procedures regarding the engagement quality control review process."

2015/16 Audit Quality Inspection Report on Deloitte LLP

Our approach to quality

AQR team report and findings

Review of individual audits

The following chart provides a summary of the AQR's assessment of the quality of our individual audits inspected in 2015/16, with comparatives for the previous 4 years. The chart also shows the 5 year average of Deloitte and the 5 year average of the 6 largest firms inspected by the AQR (which comprises Deloitte LLP, Ernst & Young LLP, KPMG LLP, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, BDO LLP and Grant Thornton UK LLP).

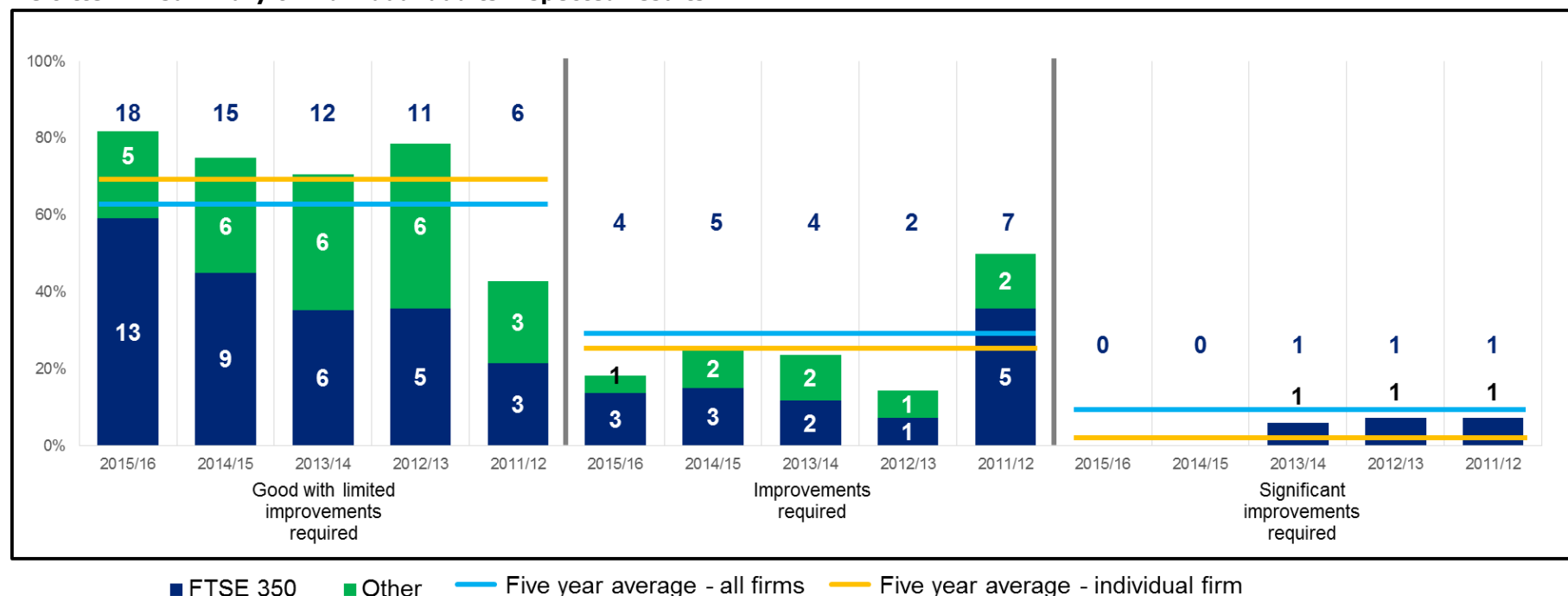
The AQR categorises audits as either:

- Good with limited improvements required
- Improvements required
- Significant improvements required

Changes to the proportion of audits reviewed falling within each grade from year to year reflect a wide range of factors, which may include the size, complexity and risk of the individual audits selected for review and the scope of the individual reviews. For this reason, and given the sample sizes involved, changes in gradings from one year to the next are not necessarily indicative of any overall change in audit quality at the firm.

All the AQR public reports on individual firms are available on its website <https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Conduct/Audit-Quality-Review/Audit-firm-specific-reports.aspx>

Deloitte LLP summary of individual audits inspected results



Additional resources available to you

How we keep you up to date

Stay tuned online: Internet-based corporate reporting updates

The Deloitte UK Technical Team run a series of internet-based financial reporting updates, aimed at helping finance teams keep up to speed with IFRS and UK reporting issues.

Each update lasts no more than one hour, and sessions are held three times a year, at the end of March, June and October. Recordings of past sessions are available via www.deloitte.co.uk/audit.

Corporate Reporting Surveys

Each of our range of surveys looks at reporting practices by 130 listed companies – 100 in the corporate sector and 30 investment trusts. They provide an excellent way to benchmark your reporting against your peer group.

IASPlus

The IAS Plus website, maintained by Deloitte, provides the most comprehensive information on the Internet about international financial reporting. It is aimed at accounting professionals, businesses, financial analysts, standard-setters and regulators, and accounting educators and students. The site, which is totally free of charge, has a broad array of resources about the International Accounting Standards Board, International Financial Reporting Standards, and international accounting and auditing in general. It includes:

- Summaries of all IASB standards and interpretations;
- Background on all IASB and IFRIC agenda projects plus summaries of all IASB and IFRIC meetings;
- Comparisons of IFRSs and various local GAAPs;
- Updates on national accounting standards development in around 80 countries and regions throughout the world; and
- Free e-learning modules for each IAS and IFRS – made available at no charge in the public interest.

The site is available to browse at any time; alternatively you can subscribe to e-mail alerts and newsletters by going to: <http://www.iasplus.com/subscribe.htm>



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