

Edinburgh and South East Scotland Strategic Development Planning Authority

Annual Audit Plan 2020/21

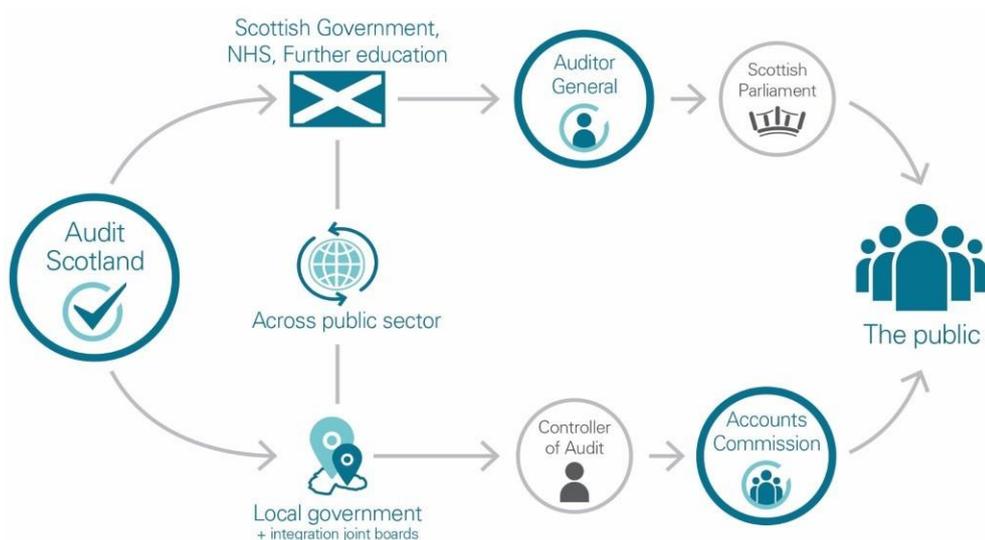


Prepared for
May 2021

Who we are

The Auditor General, the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland work together to deliver public audit in Scotland:

- The Auditor General is an independent crown appointment, made on the recommendation of the Scottish Parliament, to audit the Scottish Government, NHS and other bodies and report to Parliament on their financial health and performance.
- The Accounts Commission is an independent public body appointed by Scottish ministers to hold local government to account. The Controller of Audit is an independent post established by statute, with powers to report directly to the Commission on the audit of local government.
- Audit Scotland is governed by a board, consisting of the Auditor General, the chair of the Accounts Commission, a non-executive board chair, and two non-executive members appointed by the Scottish Commission for Public Audit, a commission of the Scottish Parliament.



About us

Our vision is to be a world-class audit organisation that improves the use of public money.

Through our work for the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission, we provide independent assurance to the people of Scotland that public money is spent properly and provides value. We aim to achieve this by:

- carrying out relevant and timely audits of the way the public sector manages and spends money
- reporting our findings and conclusions in public
- identifying risks, making clear and relevant recommendations.

Contents

Risks and planned work	4
Audit scope and timing	8

Risks and planned work

- 1.** This annual audit plan contains an overview of the planned scope and timing of our audit which is carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs), the [Code of Audit Practice](#), and guidance on planning the audit. This plan sets out the work necessary to allow us to provide an independent auditor's report on the annual accounts and meet the wider scope requirements of public sector audit including the audit of Best Value.
- 2.** The wider scope of public audit contributes to assessments and conclusions on financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money.
- 3.** The public health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has had a significant and profound effect on every aspect of Scottish society. Public services have been drastically affected, requiring immediate changes to the way they are provided. The impact on public finances has been unprecedented, which has necessitated both the Scottish and UK governments providing substantial additional funding for public services as well as support for individuals, businesses and the economy. It is likely that further financial measures will be needed and that the effects will be felt well into the future.
- 4.** Public audit has an important contribution to the recovery and renewal of public services. The Auditor General, the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland are responding to the risks to public services and finances from COVID-19 across the full range of audit work including annual audits and the programme of performance audits. Audit Scotland views 2020/21 as another challenging year and in January 2021 published [Covid-19: What it means for public audit in Scotland – update](#) which restates the key principles for our response to Covid-19. It also provided an update on the financial and performance audit programmes. The well-being of audit teams and the delivery of high-quality audits remain paramount. Maintaining a pragmatic and flexible approach will enable change at short notice as new issues emerge, or current risks change in significance. Where this impacts on annual audits, an addendum to this annual audit plan may be necessary.

Adding value

- 5.** We aim to add value to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Strategic Development Planning Authority (SESplan) through our external audit work by being constructive and forward looking, by identifying areas for improvement and by recommending and encouraging good practice. In so doing, we intend to help SESplan promote improved standards of governance, better management and decision making and more effective use of resources.

Audit risks

- 6.** Based on our discussions with staff, attendance at joint committee meetings and a review of supporting information we have identified the following significant risks for SESplan. We have categorised these risks into financial statements risks and wider dimension risks. The key audit risks, which require specific audit testing, are detailed in [Exhibit 1](#).

Exhibit 1

2020/21 Significant audit risks

Financial statements risks

<p>1 Risk of material misstatement due to fraud caused by the management override of controls</p> <p>International Auditing Standards require that audits are planned to consider the risk of material misstatement in the financial statements caused by fraud, which is presumed to be a significant risk in any audit. This includes the risk of fraud due to the management override of controls.</p>	<p>Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed testing of journal entries. • Review of accounting estimates. • Focused testing of accruals and prepayments. • Evaluation of significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business.
<p>2 New financial systems</p> <p>During 2020/21, Fife Council introduced new general ledger and accounts payable systems. The systems went live in July 2020.</p> <p>The new systems will be used to produce the 2020/21 financial statements, and, as with any major change in financial systems, there is an increased risk of misstatement in the figures and balances.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service auditor assurances will be obtained from the auditors of Fife Council over the completeness, accuracy and allocation of balances, and income and expenditure.

Wider dimension risks

<p>3 Future operations and structure of SESplan</p> <p>Changes in legislation (Planning (Scotland) Act 2019) have impacted on the future operations and structure of SESplan. Arrangements are still being developed and finalised, however, it is expected that the developments could result in the winding down of SESplan in 2021 as its functions are expected to transfer to the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland City Region Deal.</p>	<p>Meeting of the Joint Committee to be convened in June 2021 to agree procedures and timescale for winding down of SESplan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of updates and papers reported to the Joint Committee. • Discussions with management about developments impacting on the future operations and structure of SESplan.
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Source: Audit Scotland

7. As set out in ISA(UK) 240, there is a presumed risk of fraud in revenue recognition. There is a risk that income may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements. We have rebutted this presumed risk in 2020/21 because we do not consider this to be a significant risk as there are limited opportunities to manipulate the way income is recognised.

8. In line with Practice Note 10, as most public-sector bodies are net expenditure bodies, the risk of fraud is more likely to occur in expenditure. We have rebutted

the risk of material misstatement caused by fraud in expenditure in 2020/21 as there are limited opportunities to manipulate the way expenditure is recognised.

Reporting arrangements

9. Audit reporting is the visible output for the annual audit. All annual audit plans and the outputs as detailed in [Exhibit 2](#), and any other outputs on matters of public interest will be published on our website: www.audit-scotland.gov.uk.

10. Matters arising from our audit will be reported on a timely basis and will include agreed action plans. Draft management reports will be issued to the relevant officers to confirm factual accuracy.

11. We will provide an independent auditor's report to SESplan, and the Accounts Commission setting out our opinions on the annual accounts. We will provide the Accountable Officer and the Accounts Commission with an annual report on the audit containing observations and recommendations on significant matters which have arisen during the audit.

Exhibit 2 2020/21 Audit outputs

Audit Output	Target date	Committee Date
Annual Audit Plan	30 April 2021	June 2021
Independent Auditor's Report	30 November 2021	TBD – by 30 November 2021
Annual Audit Report	30 November 2021	TBD - by 30 November 2021

Source: Audit Scotland

Audit fee

12. The proposed audit fee for the 2020/21 audit of SESplan is £3,040 (2019/20: £2,960). In determining the audit fee we have taken account of the risk exposure of SESplan, the planned management assurances in place and the level of reliance we plan to take from the work of internal audit. Our audit approach assumes receipt of the unaudited annual accounts with a complete working papers package by 30 June 2021.

13. Where our audit cannot proceed as planned through, for example, late receipt of unaudited annual accounts, a supplementary fee may be levied. An additional fee may also be required in relation to any work or other significant exercises out with our planned audit activity.

Responsibilities

The Joint Committee and Treasurer

14. Audited bodies have the primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of public funds, compliance with relevant legislation and establishing effective arrangements for governance, propriety and regularity that enable them to successfully deliver their objectives.

15. The audit of the annual accounts does not relieve management or the Joint Committee as those charged with governance, of their responsibilities.

Appointed auditor

16. Our responsibilities as independent auditors are established by the 1973 Act for local government, and the Code of Audit Practice (including supplementary guidance) and guided by the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard.

17. Auditors in the public sector give an independent opinion on the financial statements and other information within the annual accounts. We also review and report on the arrangements within the audited body to manage its performance and use of resources. In doing this, we aim to support improvement and accountability.

Audit scope and timing

Annual accounts

18. The annual accounts, which include the financial statements, will be the foundation and source for most of the audit work necessary to support our judgements and conclusions. We also consider the wider environment and challenges facing the public sector. Our audit approach includes:

- understanding the business of SESplan and the associated risks which could impact on the financial statements
- assessing the key systems of internal control, and establishing how weaknesses in these systems could impact on the financial statements
- identifying major transaction streams, balances and areas of estimation and understanding how SESplan will include these in the financial statements
- assessing the risks of material misstatement in the financial statements
- determining the nature, timing and extent of audit procedures necessary to provide us with sufficient audit evidence as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

19. We will give an opinion on whether the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with applicable law and the 2020/21 Code of the state of affairs of SESplan as at 31 March 2021 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2020/21 Code of practice on local authority accounting in the UK.



Statutory other information in the annual accounts

20. We also review and report on statutory other information published within the annual accounts including the management commentary, annual governance statement and the remuneration report. We give an opinion on whether these have been compiled in accordance with the appropriate regulations and frameworks in our independent auditor's report.

21. We also review the content of the annual report for consistency with the financial statements and with our knowledge. We report any uncorrected material misstatements in statutory other information.

Materiality

22. We apply the concept of materiality in planning and performing the audit. It is used in evaluating the effect of identified misstatements on the audit, and of any uncorrected misstatements, on the financial statements and in forming our opinions in the independent auditor's report.

23. We calculate materiality at different levels as described below. The calculated materiality values for SESplan are set out in [Exhibit 3](#).

Exhibit 3

Materiality values

Materiality	Amount
Planning materiality – This is the figure we calculate to assess the overall impact of audit adjustments on the financial statements. It has been set at 1% of net assets at 31 March 2020 based on the 2019/20 signed accounts.	£1,300
Performance materiality – This acts as a trigger point. If the aggregate of errors identified during the financial statements audit exceeds performance materiality this would indicate that further audit procedures should be considered. Using our professional judgement, we have calculated performance materiality at 75% of planning materiality.	£970
Transactions performance materiality - This is a lower specific materiality that has been set at 75% of 1% of gross expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020 based on the 2019/20 signed accounts.	£160
Reporting threshold (i.e., clearly trivial) – We are required to report to those charged with governance on all unadjusted misstatements more than the 'reporting threshold' amount.	£100

Source: Audit Scotland

Timetable

24. To support the efficient use of resources it is critical that the annual accounts timetable is agreed with us to produce the unaudited accounts. We have included an agreed timetable at [Exhibit 4](#).

Exhibit 4

Annual accounts timetable – target dates

 Key stage	 Date
Consideration of unaudited annual accounts by those charged with governance	31 August 2021
Latest submission date of unaudited annual report and accounts with complete working papers package	30 June 2021
Latest date for final clearance meeting with Treasurer	29 October 2021
Issue of Letter of Representation and proposed independent auditor's report	16 November 2021
Agreement of audited unsigned annual report and accounts	16 November 2021
Independent auditor's report signed	30 November 2021
Issue of Annual Audit Report to those charged with governance	30 November 2021

Internal audit

25. Auditing standards require internal and external auditors to work closely together to make best use of available audit resources. Internal Audit is provided by Fife Council's Audit and Risk Management Services (ARMS). We seek to rely

on the work of internal audit wherever possible to avoid duplication, however there are no planned internal audit reviews for SESplan this year.

Audit dimensions

26. Our audit is based on four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public sector audit requirements as shown in [Exhibit 5](#).

Exhibit 5 Audit dimensions



Source: Code of Audit Practice

27. Our standard audits are based on four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public sector audit requirements. These are: financial sustainability, financial management, governance and accountability and value for money.

28. The Code of Audit Practice includes provisions relating to the audit of small bodies. Where the application of the full wider audit scope is judged by auditors not to be appropriate to an audited body then the annual audit work can focus on the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement and the financial sustainability of the body and its services. In the light of the volume and lack of complexity of the financial transactions, we plan to apply the small body provisions of the Code to the 2020/21 audit of SESplan.

Financial sustainability

29. As auditors we consider the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting as part of the annual audit. We will also comment on financial sustainability in the medium term (two to five years). We will carry out work and conclude on:

- the effectiveness of financial planning in identifying and addressing risks to financial sustainability in the short, and medium term
- the appropriateness and effectiveness of arrangements in place to address any identified funding gaps.

Governance and transparency

30. Governance and transparency is concerned with the effectiveness of scrutiny and governance arrangements, leadership and decision – making and transparent reporting of financial and performance information. We will review, conclude and report on:

- whether SESplan can demonstrate that the governance arrangements in place are appropriate and operating effectively
- whether there is effective scrutiny, challenge and transparency on the decision-making and finance and performance reports
- the quality and timeliness of financial and performance reporting.

Independence and objectivity

31. Auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission or Auditor General must comply with the Code of Audit Practice and relevant supporting guidance. When auditing the financial statements auditors must also comply with professional standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council and those of the professional accountancy bodies. These standards impose stringent rules to ensure the independence and objectivity of auditors. Audit Scotland has robust arrangements in place to ensure compliance with these standards including an annual “fit and proper” declaration for all members of staff. The arrangements are overseen by the Director of Audit Services, who serves as Audit Scotland’s Ethics Partner.

32. The engagement lead (i.e. appointed auditor) for SESplan is Patricia Fraser, Senior Audit Manager. Auditing and ethical standards require the appointed auditor to communicate any relationships that may affect the independence and objectivity of audit staff. We are not aware of any such relationships pertaining to the audit of SESplan.

Quality control

33. International Standard on Quality Control 1 (ISQC1) requires that a system of quality control is established, as part of financial audit procedures, to provide reasonable assurance that professional standards and regulatory and legal requirements are being complied with and that the independent auditor’s report or opinion is appropriate in the circumstances.

34. The foundation of our quality framework is our Audit Guide, which incorporates the application of professional auditing, quality and ethical standards and the Code of Audit Practice (and supporting guidance) issued by Audit Scotland and approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. To ensure that we achieve the required quality standards Audit Scotland conducts peer reviews and internal quality reviews. Additionally, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS) have been commissioned to carry out external quality reviews.

35. As part of our commitment to quality and continuous improvement, Audit Scotland will periodically seek your views on the quality of our service provision. We welcome feedback at any time and this may be directed to the engagement lead.

SESplan

Annual Audit Plan 2020/21

If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us to discuss your needs: 0131 625 1500 or info@audit-scotland.gov.uk

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Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh EH3 9DN
T: 0131 625 1500 E: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk