
To: Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee

On: 18 September 2023

Report by: Chief Finance Officer

Heading: Annual Audit Report on IJB Accounts 2022/23

1 Summary

- 1.1 Each year the IJB's external auditors (Ernst and Young LLP (EY)) carry out an audit of the IJB's financial statements and provide an opinion as to whether those statements provide a true and fair view of the financial position of the IJB and its income and expenditure for the year; and also whether they have been prepared in accordance with the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.
- 1.2 In accordance with International Auditing Standards (ISA260), EY are obliged to report to those charged with the governance of the organisation, matters which have arisen in the course of the audit.
- 1.3 The attached report from EY outlines their findings from the audit of the 2022/23 IJB's financial statements.
- 1.4 Under the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, which came into force from 10 October 2014, the IJB must meet to consider the Annual Accounts and aim to approve those accounts for signature no later than 30 September immediately following the financial year to which they relate. In addition, any further report by the external auditor on the audited annual accounts should also be considered by the IJB (or a committee of the IJB whose remit includes audit & governance)
- 1.5 In order to comply with these requirements, the audited financial statements will be presented to the IJB for approval at its meeting of 29 September 2023.
- 1.6 Rob Jones, Appointed Auditor (Partner, EY) and Grace Scanlin (Senior Manager, EY), will attend the IJB's Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee to speak to their report. The 2022/23 Annual Accounts were submitted to the IJB for approval on 30 June 2023 and then submitted for audit to EY.
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2 Recommendation

The IJB Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- Note the Annual Audit Report from EY attached.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The financial statements demonstrate that the IJB has managed its financial affairs within the resources available.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Strategic Plan and Community Planning** – none
4. **Wider Strategic Alignment** – none
5. **Legal** – An audit opinion free from qualification demonstrates the IJB's compliance with the statutory accounting requirements set out in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
6. **Property/Assets** – none
7. **Information Technology** – none
8. **Equality & Human Rights** – The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the IJB's website.
9. **Fairer Scotland Duty** – none
10. **Health & Safety** – none
11. **Procurement** – none
12. **Risk** – none
13. **Privacy Impact** – none.

List of Background Papers – None

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Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board


**Annual Audit Report
Year Ended 31 March 2023**

Provisional

18 September 2023



Building a better
working world



This report has been prepared in accordance with Terms of Appointment Letter, through which Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission have appointed us as external auditor Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board for financial years 2022/23 to 2026/27.

This report is for the benefit of the Board and is made available to the Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission (together the Recipients). This report has not been designed to be of benefit to anyone except the Recipients. In preparing this report we have not taken into account the interests, needs or circumstances of anyone apart from the Recipients, even though we may have been aware that others might read this report.

Any party other than the Recipients that obtains access to this report or a copy (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, through a Recipient's Publication Scheme or otherwise) and chooses to rely on this report (or any part of it) does so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Ernst & Young LLP does not assume any responsibility and will not accept any liability in respect of this report to any party other than the Recipients.

Accessibility

Our report will be available on Audit Scotland's website and we have therefore taken steps to comply with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Contents

Section	Auditor Responsibility	Page
1. Key messages	Summarise the key messages for the 2022/23 audit	03
2. Introduction	Summarises our audit approach and application of materiality	05
3. Financial Statements	Provide an opinion on audited bodies' financial statements Review and report on, as appropriate, other information such as the annual governance statement and remuneration report	08
4. Best Value and Wider Scope Audit	Demonstrate compliance with the wider public audit scope by reviewing and providing judgements and conclusions on the Board's: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Arrangements to secure sound financial management;▶ The regard shown to financial sustainability;▶ Clarity of Reports to implement the vision, strategy and priorities of the Board, and the effectiveness of governance arrangements for delivery; and▶ The use of resources to improve outcomes. Best Value audit work is integrated with wider scope annual audit work.	16
Appendices	Undertake statutory duties, and comply with professional engagement and ethical standards: Appendix A: Code of Audit Practice: responsibilities Appendix B: Auditor Independence Appendix C: Required communications with the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee Appendix D: Timing of communications and deliverables Appendix E: Action Plan Appendix F: Adjusted audit differences Appendix G: Audit fees Appendix H: Additional audit information	29

1. Key messages

Financial statements



Financial statements

Our assessment: Green

We have concluded our audit of the financial statements of Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board for the year ended 31 March 2023. The draft financial statements and supporting working papers were of a good quality. During the course of the audit, we identified one audit difference that management adjusted in the financial statements.

Overall, we were satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement, reflects the requirements of CIPFA's updated *Delivering Good Governance Framework*.

We made one recommendation in relation to the management of hosted services at Appendix E. Renfrewshire IJB hosts a small number of services on behalf of other IJBs within the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. The current process for reporting on hosted services is based on out of date arrangements and the Chief Finance Officer will therefore work with partners to agree a revised process for 2023/24 onwards.



Going concern

Our assessment: Green





In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Government Accounting, the IJB prepares its financial statements on a going concern basis unless informed by the Scottish Government of the intention for dissolution without transfer of services or function to another entity.

Under auditing standard ISA 570, we are required to undertake greater challenge of management's assessment of going concern, including testing of the adequacy of the supporting evidence we obtained. The IJB has concluded that there are no material uncertainties around its going concern status, however it has disclosed the nature of its financial position in the financial statements to reflect the ongoing impact of recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, increased demand for services and inflationary pressures. The Board has also disclosed how the partners will consider any overspends.

We have no matters to report in respect of our work around going concern or the conclusions reached by the Board.

Our auditor judgements are RAG rated based on our assessment of the adequacy of the IJB's arrangements throughout the year, as well as the overall pace of improvement and future risk associated with each area. This takes account of both external risks not within the IJB's control and internal risks which can be managed by the Board, as well as control and process observations made through our audit work.

Wider Scope

	 <p>Financial management Financial management means having sound budgetary processes. Audited bodies require the ability to understand the financial environment and whether internal controls are operating effectively.</p> <p>Our assessment: Green</p>	<p>The IJB recorded a net underspend in 2022/23 of £0.63 million.</p> <p>We noted that the Board received comprehensive financial monitoring reports throughout the year, including summaries of emerging financial risks. A range of financial pressures will impact in 2023/24 and beyond, including service support recharges from Renfrewshire Council, Primary Care Improvement Plan shortfalls in funding and prescribing costs that are difficult to control.</p>
	 <p>Financial sustainability 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.</p> <p>Our assessment: Red</p>	<p>In 2023/24, the IJB's General Reserve is forecast to fall to £1.98 million, or 0.5% of net expenditure, materially below the Board's target of 2%.</p> <p>The forecast for 2023/24 relies on the IJB delivering savings of and the use of reserves, but significant cost pressures remain along with wider external risks. There is a risk that under the current budget strategy, the IJB's General Reserves will be exhausted in the short term. Future savings must therefore be agreed as a matter of urgency.</p>
	 <p>Vision, leadership & governance The effectiveness of scrutiny and governance arrangements, leadership and decision making, and transparent reporting of financial and performance information.</p> <p>Our assessment: Green</p>	<p>Governance arrangements are well-established and functioned properly throughout 2022/23.</p> <p>There were no weaknesses in governance or internal control that were required to be reported within the Annual Governance Statement. The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee will consider their arrangements against updated good practice guidance in 2023/24.</p>
	 <p>Use of resources The IJB's approach to demonstrating economy, efficiency, and effectiveness through the use of resources and reporting outcomes.</p> <p>Our assessment: Green</p>	<p>The IJB has a well-developed approach in place to monitor and report on key areas of performance, and was able to demonstrate areas of improvement in 2022/23.</p> <p>The IJB has, however, highlighted that the financial position places significant risk on the future delivery of services at the same levels.</p>
	 <p>Best Value We are required to conclude on the IJB's arrangements to demonstrate the achievement of Best Value.</p> <p>Our assessment: Amber</p>	<p>The IJB has appropriate arrangements to secure Best Value, including performance and financial reporting arrangements.</p> <p>The Board has established a reform programme, Sustainable Futures, to address key areas of challenge and deliver savings. It has, however, acknowledged that further efficiency savings are likely to be required which may impact frontline services.</p>

2. Introduction

Purpose of our report

The Accounts Commission for Scotland appointed EY as the external auditor of Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board ('IJB' or 'the Board') for the five year period to 2026/27.

We undertake our audit in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice (June 2021); Auditing Standards and guidance issued by the Financial Reporting Council; relevant legislation; and other relevant guidance issued by Audit Scotland.

This Annual Audit Report is designed to summarise the key findings and conclusions from our audit work. It is addressed to both members of the IJB and the Accounts Commission, and presented to those charged with governance. This report is provided to Audit Scotland and is published on their website.

A key objective of audit reporting is to add value by supporting the improvement of the use of public money. We aim to achieve this through sharing our insights from our audit work, our observations around where the Board employs best practice and where practices can be improved, and how risks facing the IJB can be mitigated. We use these insights to form audit recommendations to support the Board.

Such areas we have identified are highlighted throughout this report together with our judgements and conclusions regarding arrangements, and where relevant recommendations and actions agreed with management. We also report on the progress made by management in implementing previously agreed recommendations.

We draw your attention to the fact that our audit was not designed to identify all matters that may be relevant to the IJB. Our views on internal control and governance arrangements have been based solely on the audit procedures performed in respect of the audit of the financial statements and the other procedures performed in fulfilling our audit plan.

Our independence

We confirm that we have undertaken client and engagement continuance procedures, which include our assessment of our continuing independence to act as external auditor. Further information is available in Appendix B.

Scope and responsibilities

The Code sets out the responsibilities of both the Board and the auditor (summarised in Appendix A). We outlined these in our Annual Audit Plan which was presented to the Board's Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee on 24 March 2023. There have been no material changes to the plan.

Our review and assessment of materiality

In our Annual Audit Plan we communicated that our audit procedures would be performed using a overall materiality of £3.4 million. We have assessed that this level of materiality remains appropriate for the actual outturn for the 2022/23 financial year. Performance materiality remains at 50% of overall materiality at £1.7 million.

Financial Statements audit

We are responsible for conducting an audit of the Board's financial statements. We provide an opinion as to:

- ▶ Whether they give a true and fair view, in accordance with applicable law and the 2022/23 Code of Accounting Practice, of the income and expenditure of the IJB for the year ended 31 March 2023.
- ▶ Have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs, as interpreted and adapted by the 2022/23 Code.
- ▶ Whether they have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

We also review and report on the consistency of the other information prepared and published along with the financial statements.

We outlined the significant risks and other focus areas for the 2022/23 audit in our Annual Audit Plan, which was presented to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee on 24 March 2023. There have been no changes to our planned audit approach.

One significant risk was identified in relation to the risk of fraud in expenditure recognition, which includes the risk of management override of controls. We consider this risk to manifest itself through the manipulation of expenditure recognition. In addition, we continued to place increased focus on management's assertion regarding the going concern basis of preparation in the financial statements. Our findings are summarised in Section 3 of this report.

Exhibit 1: Our materiality assessment in 2022/23

Our Annual Audit Plan explained that our audit procedures would be performed using a materiality of £3.4 million. We have considered whether any change to our materiality was required in light of the income and expenditure in 2022/23 and concluded that no changes were required.



**Overall
materiality**



**Performance
materiality**



**Reporting
materiality**

We apply a lower level of materiality to the audited section of the Remuneration Report. We also apply professional judgement to consider the materiality of Related Party Transactions to both parties.

| Wider scope and best value

Under the Code of Audit Practice, our responsibilities extend beyond the audit of the financial statements. Due to the nature of the IJB, our wider scope work requires significant allocation of resources in the audit. The Code requires auditors to provide judgements and conclusions on the four dimensions of wider scope public audit:

- ▶ The Board's arrangements to secure sound financial management.
- ▶ The regard shown to financial sustainability.
- ▶ Clarity of plans to implement the vision, strategy and priorities of the Board, and the effectiveness of governance arrangements for delivery.
- ▶ The use of resources to improve outcomes.

Our Annual Audit Plan identified one area of significant risk in relation to the wider scope dimensions, regarding the development of a robust Medium Term Financial Plan. Our findings are summarised in Section 4 of this report.

Our annual assessment of the IJB's arrangements to secure best value is integrated within our wider scope annual audit work.

3. Financial Statements

Introduction

The annual financial statements allow the IJB to demonstrate accountability for the resources that it has the power to direct, and report on its overall performance in the application of those resources during the year.

This section of our report summarises the audit work undertaken to support our audit opinion, including our conclusions in response to the significant and other risks identified in our Annual Audit Plan.

The plan highlighted one area that we identified as a fraud risk relating to the presumed risk of fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, including through management override of controls. For the IJB, we consider this risk to manifest itself as an expenditure recognition risk.

Compliance with regulations

As part of our oversight of the IJB's financial reporting process we report on our consideration of the quality of working papers and supporting documentation prepared, predominantly by the finance team, to support the audit.

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Government Accounting 2022/23.

The draft financial statements and supporting working papers were submitted for audit by 30th June 2023, in line with requirements. The financial statements and working papers were of a good quality.

We were satisfied that the IJB made the financial statements available for public inspection in accordance with Regulation 9 of The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

As part of the audit process, we worked with the finance team to make enhancements to the presentation of the financial statements, including going concern disclosures.

Audit outcomes

We identified one adjustment arising from the audit which have been reflected within the financial statements. There were no unadjusted differences. Our overall audit opinion is summarised on the following page.

As part of the audit we reviewed the financial statements and made a number of comments aimed at improving the compliance with the Code of Accounting Practice, or to enhance the understanding of the financial statements. We worked with management to make amendments as appropriate and will continue to discuss good practice going forward.

We made one recommendation relating to the financial statements as a result of the annual audit, which was graded as moderate priority (Grade 2). This, together with management responses are included within the action plan in Appendix E.

Audit Status

Our audit is substantially complete, subject to the following outstanding areas:

- Receipt and review of finalised financial statements;
- Written confirmation statements from the Directors of Finance at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde; and
- Updated confirmation that there have been no subsequent events in the period to date of signing.

Audit approach

We adopted a substantive approach to the audit as we have concluded this is the most efficient way to obtain the level of audit assurance required to conclude that the financial statements are not materially misstated.

During our planning procedures, we determine which accounts, disclosures and relevant assertions could contain risks of material misstatement.

Our audit involves:

- ▶ Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud, error or design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. Obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the IJB's internal control.
- ▶ Evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ▶ Concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting. Evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- ▶ Obtaining sufficient appropriate audit evidence to express an opinion on the financial statements.
- ▶ Reading other information contained in the financial statements to form assessment, including that the annual report is fair, balanced and understandable.
- ▶ Ensuring that reporting to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee appropriately addresses matters communicated by us and whether it is materially inconsistent with our understanding and the financial statements.
- ▶ We rigorously maintain auditor independence (refer to Appendix B).

Exhibit 2: Our audit opinion

Element of our opinion	Basis of our opinion	Conclusions
Financial statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Truth and fairness of the state of affairs of the IJB at 31 March 2023 and its expenditure and income for the year then ended. ► Financial statements in accordance with the relevant financial reporting framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► We report on the outcomes of our audit procedures to respond to the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement that we have identified, including our judgements within this section of our report. We did not identify any areas of material misstatement. ► We are satisfied that accounting policies are appropriate and estimates are reasonable. ► We have considered the financial statements against Code requirements, and additional guidance issued by CIPFA and Audit Scotland. 	<p>We [have issued an unqualified] audit opinion on the 2022/23 financial statements for the IJB.</p>
Going concern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► We are required to conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► We conduct core financial statements audit work, including review and challenge of management's assessment of the appropriateness of the going concern basis. ► Wider scope procedures including the forecasts are considered as part of our work on financial sustainability. 	<p>In accordance with the work reported on page 15, we have not identified any material uncertainties.</p>
Other information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► We are required to consider whether the other information in the financial statements is materially inconsistent with other knowledge obtained during the audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for other information included in the financial statements. ► We conduct a range of substantive procedures on the financial statements and our conclusion draws upon review of committee and board minutes and papers, regular discussions with management, our understanding of the IJB and the wider sector. 	<p>We are satisfied that the Annual Report meets the core requirements set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.</p>

Exhibit 2: Our audit opinion (continued)

Element of our opinion	Basis of our opinion	Conclusions
Matters prescribed by the Accounts Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Audited part of remuneration report has been properly prepared. ▶ Management commentary / annual governance statement are consistent with the financial statements and have been properly prepared. 	Our procedures include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reviewing the content of narrative disclosures to information known to us. ▶ Our assessment of the Annual Governance Statement against the requirements of the CIPFA Delivering Good Governance Code. 	<p>We [issued] an unqualified opinion. We note that one prior period error was noted in relation to the disclosure of the Chief Officer's full year equivalent salary (Appendix F).</p>
Matters on which we are required to report by exception	We are required to report on whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There has been a failure to achieve a prescribed financial objective. ▶ Adequate accounting records have been kept. ▶ Financial statements and the audited part of the remuneration report are not in agreement with the accounting records. ▶ We have not received the information we require. 	<p>We [have no] matters to report.</p>

Our response to significant and fraud audit risks

We identified one significant risk within our 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan:

- Risk of fraud in expenditure recognition, including through management override of control.

| What is the risk?

As we outlined in our Annual Audit Plan, ISA (UK) 240 requires us to assume that fraud risk from income recognition is a significant risk. In the public sector, we extend our consideration to the risk of material misstatement by manipulation of expenditure.

As there is no material judgement associated with the recognition of the IJB's funding from Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, we have determined that the risk of revenue recognition does not materialise.

| What judgements are we focused on?

For expenditure we focus on the risk in relation to the existence and occurrence of expenditure incurred by the IJB in commissioning services from the partners.

There may be judgement in the timing of the recognition of expenditure.

| What did we do?

We undertake specific, additional procedures for income and expenditure streams where we identified a fraud risk. For 2022/23 our work included:

- We challenged management on how the IJB gains assurance over the expenditure it incurs and the basis of payments it makes to its partner bodies to deliver commissioned services.

- We reviewed the financial information that management present to the IJB that clarifies the source of information provided by each of the IJB partners. Reports to the IJB at the year end also made clear that the year end outturn represented the approval by the IJB of the final expenditure incurred in commissioning services from Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.
- Review of additional revenue streams and cut-off testing for additional income received.
- We obtained written confirmation statements from the Director of Finance at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and the Section 95 Officer at Renfrewshire Council of the spend by the respective bodies on delivering services, and therefore their request for payment from the IJB to cover those costs. We obtained a copy of those confirmations and agreed figures within the financial statement to source documentation.
- We obtained independent confirmation from the appointed auditor at both Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde of the income and expenditure transactions recorded at their respective audited bodies. The confirmations agreed the income and expenditure amounts transacted in the year.

| Risk of management override

Our Annual Audit Plan recognises that under ISA (UK) 240, management is considered to be in a unique position to perpetrate fraud in financial reporting because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. We respond to this risk on every engagement.

| Risk of fraud

We considered the risk of fraud, enquired with management about their assessment of the risks of fraud and the controls to address those risks. We also developed our understanding of the oversight of those charged with governance over management's processes over fraud.

| Testing on journal entries

We tested the appropriateness of manual journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements. We obtained all journals posted by management to record the transactions of the IJB, which are hosted on the Renfrewshire Council financial ledger. All of the journals for the IJB's transactions were posted at the year end and we reviewed all transactions in the course of our work.

| Judgements and estimates

Management identified one significant estimate within the financial statements, relating to hosted services where, for example, Renfrewshire IJB provides services for other IJBs.

We reviewed supporting documentation on the basis for allocation of charges and reperformed calculations as appropriate. A transposed figure was identified and subsequently amended. This is noted as an audit adjustment at Appendix F.

Each of the six IJBs across the area served by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde provides hosted services on a reciprocal basis. There are a range of approaches to agree the respective balances but for the services hosted by RIJB (podiatry and primary care support), the consumption of services calculation is based on actual patient activity. The current process for reporting on hosted activity at the year end has not been revised since the IJB's were first created, and there is therefore a need to agree a revised process for reporting on hosted activity for 2023/24 onwards.

| Recommendation 1: The Board needs to update the arrangements in place with other IJBs in relation to hosted services.



[Our conclusions]

- ▶ Our testing has not identified any material misstatements relating to revenue and expenditure recognition.
- ▶ We have not identified any material weaknesses in the design and implementation of controls around journal processing. We did not identify any instances of evidence of management override of controls.
- ▶ There was no disagreement during the course of the audit over any accounting treatment or disclosure and we encountered no significant difficulties in the audit.]

| Accounting policies

We considered the consistency and application of accounting policies, and the overall presentation of financial information. We consider the accounting policies adopted by the IJB to be appropriate and there were no significant accounting practices which materially depart from the Code.

| Provisions

We confirmed the process for ensuring that there were no claims applicable to the IJB that required provision to be made in relation to the CNORIS (Clinical Negligence & Other Risks Indemnity Scheme).

| Remuneration report

The Board must prepare a Remuneration Report as part of the financial statements under the Accounting Code of Practice. We apply a lower level of materiality to the Remuneration Report due to the nature of the disclosures. The unaudited accounts highlighted a error that management identified within the disclosures in 2021/22. The calculation for the full year equivalent cost for the Chief Officer's salary and pension contributions were misstated. This has been noted within our summary of adjustments in Appendix F.

We note that full year equivalent calculations are disclosure only, and that the actual payments made in year were recorded correctly.

Going concern

Audit requirements

International Auditing Standard 570 Going Concern, as applied by Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, requires auditors to undertake sufficient and appropriate audit procedures to consider whether there is a material uncertainty on going concern that requires reporting by management within the financial statements, and within the auditor's report.

Under ISA (UK) 570, we are required to undertake challenge of management's assessment of going concern, including testing of the adequacy of the supporting evidence we obtained. In light of the unprecedented nature of the ongoing impact of Covid-19, the cost of living crisis and inflationary pressures, we place increased focus on management's assertion regarding the going concern basis of preparation in the financial statements, and particularly the need to report on the impact of financial pressures on the Board and its financial sustainability.

Management's going concern assessment and associated disclosures cover the 12 month period following approval of the financial statements, to September 2024.

After completing its going concern assessment in line with the information and

support provided through earlier discussions in the audit process, the IJB has concluded that there are no material uncertainties around its going concern status. We have outlined our consideration of the Board's financial position going forward in the financial sustainability section of this report. We considered this in conjunction with management's assessment on going concern, focusing on:

- ▶ The completeness of factors considered in management's going concern assessment.
- ▶ The completeness of disclosures in the financial statements in relation to going concern and future financial pressures and how savings challenges in the short and medium term will be addressed.

The Scottish Government introduced a National Care Service (Scotland) Bill to Parliament on 20 June 2022. Under these Reports, the functions of the IJB would transfer to become the responsibility of a National Care Service by 2026. Due to the anticipated continuation of service provision, we were satisfied that the going concern basis of accounting will continue to be appropriate for the Board.



Our conclusions

- ▶ We reviewed and challenged the going concern assessment provided by management. We verified the assessment to supporting information, including key reports to the IJB and financial plans. We concur with management's assessment that there are no material uncertainties in relation to the going concern of the IJB.

ISA (UK) 315: Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement

Audit requirements

As set out within our Annual Audit Plan, there has been a significant change to the auditing standard, ISA (UK) 315 and this impacted our 2022/23 audit approach and the procedures we needed to perform.

The standard drives our approach to:

- ▶ Risk assessment.
- ▶ Understanding the Board's internal control arrangements.
- ▶ The identification of significant risks.
- ▶ How we address significant risks.

Key changes to our audit approach as a result of the implementation of ISA 315 were:

- ▶ A significant increase in audit work on the IJB's use of IT in the systems of internal control across partner organisations.
- ▶ Increased importance of our understanding of the entity and environment, the applicable financial reporting framework, and system of internal control.

- ▶ A greater focus on professional scepticism including ensuring that audit approaches do not show bias to look for corroborative evidence or excluding contradictory evidence.
- ▶ We made enhanced inquiries of management and others within the IJB who deal with fraud allegations, to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud, including cases of fraud raised by employees or other parties.
- ▶ We held discussions with key members of the IJB including in respect of the risks of fraud and considered the implications for the audit.



Our conclusions

- ▶ We identified 9 relevant IT systems and applications which contribute to the production of the Board's financial statements, with the majority of these systems and applications being hosted by the IJB's partners in Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.
- ▶ Our work did not identify any significant weaknesses in the Board's systems of internal control under the scope of ISA 315.

4. Best Value and Wider Scope Audit

Introduction

In June 2021, Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission published a revised Code of Audit Practice. This establishes the expectations for public sector auditors in Scotland for the term of the current appointment.

Risk assessment and approach

The Code sets out the four dimensions that comprise the wider scope audit for public sector in Scotland:

- ▶ Financial management.
- ▶ Financial sustainability.
- ▶ Vision, Leadership and Governance.
- ▶ The use of resources to improve outcomes.

We apply our professional judgement to risk assess and focus our work on each of the wider scope areas. In doing so, we draw upon conclusions expressed by other bodies including the IJB's internal auditors and the Care Inspectorate, along with national reports and guidance from regulators and Audit Scotland.




For each of the dimensions, we have applied a RAG rating, which represents our assessment on the adequacy of the IJB's arrangements throughout the year, as well as the overall pace of improvement and future risk associated with each dimension.

Best Value

The Code explains the arrangements for the audit of Best Value in Integration Joint Boards. The changes to IJBs anticipated from the Scottish Parliament's National Care Service Reports mean that the Accounts Commission will no longer require the Controller of Audit to report to the Commission on each IJB's performance on its Best Value duty.

As a result, the findings from our wider scope work have informed our assessment on Best Value themes in 2022/23.

Exhibit 4: Our RAG ratings

	Red	Our auditor judgements are RAG rated based on our assessment of the adequacy of the IJB's arrangements throughout the year, as well as the overall pace of improvement and future risk associated with each area.
	Amber	
	Green	This takes account of both external risks not within the IJB's control and internal risks which can be managed by the Board, as well as control and process observations made through our audit work.

Financial Management



Our overall assessment: Green

The IJB recorded a net underspend in 2022/23 of £0.63 million. Operational services were £2.13 million below budget prior to the transfer to earmarked reserves.

We noted that the Board received comprehensive financial monitoring reports throughout the year, which include forecasts of the year end position and summaries of emerging financial risks. The Board has identified a range of financial pressures in 2023/24 and beyond, including service support recharges from Renfrewshire Council, Primary Care Improvement Plan and prescribing costs that are difficult to control.

Financial Outturn

The IJB's financial outturn in 2022/23 records an underspend of £0.63 million. The year end outturn prior to transfers to reserves was an underspend in operational service delivery of £2.13 million.

However, the majority of the underspend (£1.49 million) was required to be transferred to offset a shortfall in relation to the Primary Care Improvement Fund.

The outturn reflected a significant underspend against employee costs (£4.5 million) as a result of ongoing recruitment and retention difficulties across the sector. This was offset by:

- ▶ A substantial increase in the cost and volume of prescriptions (£2.1 million). Prices increased by 10.2% in 2022/23, reflecting the volatile global market and is difficult for the IJB to predict or manage; and
- ▶ Inflationary and other increases in the cost of other supplies including IT equipment (£0.5 million), increased cleaning costs due to updated infection control arrangements (£0.19 million); and
- ▶ Additional spend on Care at Home to support delayed discharges and demand (net overspend £0.3 million).

During the year, the IJB continued to experience additional costs relating to the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

The IJB drew down funding of £2.1 million to meet the costs in 2022/23 (2021/22: £6.95 million) but we note that this is the last year that funding will be available and future costs will remain a cost pressure for the IJB.

Increasing cost pressures

While the IJB delivered an underspend in 2022/23, the Chief Finance Officer used regular budget monitoring reports to highlight increasing cost pressures in 2023/24 and beyond.

The creation of a new earmarked reserve for the Primary Care Improvement Plan (PCIP) was necessitated by a change in the allocation of funds from the Scottish Government. The allocation for 2022/23 was reduced in line with the existing PCIP reserves held by IJBs and assumes that IJBs will draw down existing balances during the year. The allocation therefore assumes that PCIP reserves held by IJBs at 31 March 2022 were largely uncommitted.

In Renfrewshire, the IJB held £4.347 million in earmarked funds to fund a commitment to an expanded model of community link workers, winter planning funding and accommodation works. As a result, the reduction in PCIP became a cost pressure in 2022/23 and beyond.

Another cost pressure that impacts Renfrewshire IJB is the introduction, in 2023/24 of recharges for support services from Renfrewshire Council. Historically, the costs of services such as property costs, finance and resources staffing costs and transportation costs have been provided by the Council.

In June 2023, the Chief Finance Officer reported on the IJB's due diligence review of the charges. As a result, the payment was reduced for 2023/24 from the Council's proposed level of £1.48 million to £1.34 million, this will be an ongoing cost pressure not previously faced by the IJB.

Like other IJBs across Scotland, Renfrewshire IJB has also highlighted the significant impact of the rise in prescribing costs. The average cost per item increased from £10.14 in April 2022 to £11.16 in February 2023, and is not subject to control by the IJB. Other costs are unknown at this stage, including the 2023/24 pay awards for local government staff.

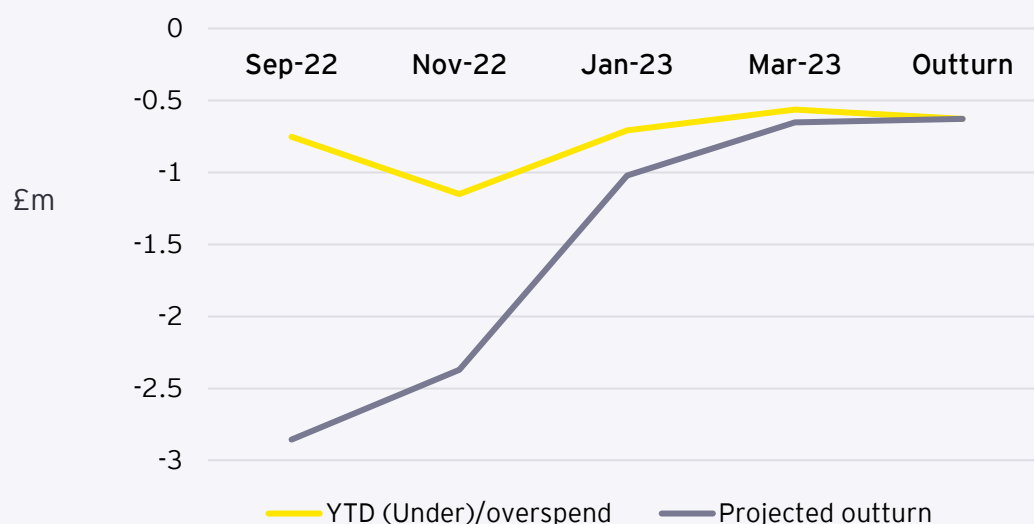
Budget monitoring was effective throughout the financial year

The IJB received regular budget monitoring reports throughout the financial year. Exhibit 4 below, highlights that the reports included actual outturn to date, along with the forecasted outturn for the financial year, and therefore impact on the Board's reserve balances.

Throughout the financial year, the IJB projected that service expenditure would be underspent against budget, principally as a result of staffing vacancies. While this has protected the IJB's financial position in 2022/23, it impacts the Board's ability to deliver the level of services anticipated, and therefore the aims of the Strategic Plan. The outturn was lower than predicted earlier in the financial year as a result of the creation of the PCIP reserve.

In 2022/23, the underspend was transferred to the general reserve to support financial flexibility in future years. The reports also provide useful explanation on variances and on emerging and known financial risks.

Exhibit 4: Budget monitoring to the Board during the financial year



| The IJB reviewed its arrangements against the Financial Management Code

The CIPFA Financial Management Code came into effect for all local government bodies during 2021/22. It is intended to support good practice in financial management, assist in demonstrating a local authority's financial sustainability, and set out standards of financial management. The standards are considered necessary to provide the strong foundation to:

- ▶ financially manage the short, medium and long-term finances of a local authority
- ▶ manage financial resilience to meet unforeseen demands on services; and
- ▶ manage unexpected shocks in their financial circumstances.

In June 2023, the IJB's Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee considered an assessment of the Board's arrangements against the requirements of the Code. The review concluded that the IJB is compliant, but outlined areas for development including:

- ▶ Continuing discussions with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to seek the final allocation for the financial year ahead of the budget setting meeting;
- ▶ Further improvements to the financial year outturn report that is presented to the IJB in June each year; and
- ▶ A review of the Scheme of Delegation to ensure that authorisation levels remain appropriate.

An action plan is in place and progress will be reported to the Committee.

As this is the first year of our annual audit work, we considered the strength and depth of the finance team, including the

arrangements in place to monitor and report on budgets to the Board.

The IJB has an experienced finance team and we noted that a number of members of staff were involved in the preparation and audit of the financial statements to support capacity. As a result, we were content that there are sufficient skills and capacity within the team, but we will continue to monitor the arrangements throughout our appointment.

| The Board concluded that its internal control arrangements remain effective

Within the IJB's Annual Governance Statement, the Board has concluded that they have obtained assurance that the system of internal control was operating effectively during the year.

Through our audit of the financial statements, we consider the design and implementation of key controls related to areas of significant risk to the financial statements. This work has included documenting the key internal financial controls and performing walkthroughs to ensure controls are implemented as designed.

We undertook an assessment of the financial control environment as part of our planning work, and updated our understanding as part of the year end audit. Following the revisions to the ISA (UK) 315, our audit methodology included a greater focus on the use of IT in the system of internal control. For the IJB, this required us to assess the systems across partner organisations.

Our work did not identify any significant weaknesses in the systems of internal control relevant to the preparation of the IJB's financial statements.

Financial Sustainability



Our overall assessment: Red

In line with the IJB's financial planning expectations, the Board's reserve balances fell significantly in 2022/23. The IJB holds general reserves as a contingency against unforeseen costs or pressures. While the IJB has identified significant savings of £2.49 million to be delivered in 2023/24, the General Reserve is forecast to fall to £1.98 million, or 0.5% of net expenditure, against the Board's target of 2%. There is a risk that under the current budget strategy, the IJB's General Reserves will be exhausted in the short term. Our assessment reflects the ongoing challenges facing the IJB and its partners and considers the level of risk and uncertainty outside the IJB's control which could impact the ability to deliver savings.

The context for financial sustainability within the IJB sector

Scotland's public services are facing unprecedented challenges. In May 2023, the Scottish Fiscal Commission published their report on Scotland's Economic and Fiscal Forecasts which showed that forecast spending could exceed funding by 2% (£1 billion) in 2024/25, rising to 4% (£1.9 billion).

The Accounts Commission publishes an annual report on the financial performance of IJBs. Integration Joint Boards: Financial Analysis 2021/22 (April 2023). The report highlights the significant pressures impacting the sector including:

- ▶ The rising demand associated with an ageing population with increasingly complex health and social care needs.
- ▶ A workforce under extreme pressure facing continuing recruitment and retention challenges, including staff turnover rates of around 30%.
- ▶ Weakening financial position, with almost half of IJBs holding contingency reserves of less than one per cent of the net cost of services.
- ▶ A funding gap of £124 million in 2022/23 alone, with IJBs expected to draw upon reserves to fund around 14% of the gap.

There has been a significant change in IJBs reserves positions across the sector as the Scottish Government recovered unspent Covid-19 funding in 2022/23

Across the sector, IJB reserves doubled in 2021/22 to £1.262 billion, largely due to Covid-19 funding received in February 2022. As a result, IJBs across Scotland held Covid-19 related funding of £502 million, including £17.2 million held by Renfrewshire IJB.

In January 2023, the Scottish Government wrote to IJBs to seek recovery of unspent Covid-19 funded balances. Funding for the response to the pandemic is therefore expected to end in 2022/23. The Scottish Government indicated that they planned to recover £321 million (64 per cent) of Covid-19 funding held by IJBs at the end of 2021/22.

Renfrewshire IJB drew down Covid-19 funding of £2.13 million to respond to continuing pandemic cost pressures in 2022/23 and the IJB returned £14.3 million of the remaining Covid-19 funding to the Scottish Government.

Overall, Renfrewshire IJB reserve balances fell by 34% in 2022/23

As Exhibit 5 highlights, in 2021/22, Renfrewshire IJB recorded £51 million overall in reserve balances, including £17.2 million in Covid-19 funding. The IJB's reserve balances fell significantly in 2022/23, primarily as a result of the return of unspent Covid-19 balances to the Scottish Government.

Each year the IJB plans to meet expenditure from earmarked reserves where, for example, funding for specific purposes has not yet been used. During 2022/23, the IJB drew down £9.9 million of balances held in these reserves. As a result of new earmarked reserves totalling £8.2 million, and the carry forward of £5.7 million in ring-fenced balances, the IJB's reserves reduced overall by £17.5 million in 2022/23.

The IJB has updated its financial outlook for the period to 2025/26

The Board considered a Medium Term Financial Plan, covering the period to 2024/25, in March 2022. The plan outlined a range of scenarios, and highlighted a potential gross budget gap within a range of £37 to £48 million for the period of the Plan, prior to any mitigating actions. In March 2023, the Board considered updated financial pressures as part of its assessment of the 2023/24 budget. The gross cost pressures in 2023/24 are estimated at £17.4 million, but significant uncertainties remain, particularly in relation to:

- ▶ The costs of prescribing (inflationary pressure estimated at £3 million);
- ▶ Any further impact of Covid-19 costs, particularly in the event of any further phases; and
- ▶ Future pay settlements (estimated at £2.9 million in 2023/24).

Exhibit 5: Reserves balances fell by £17.5 million (34%) during 2022/23



Following the application of funding and charging uplifts, the budget gap remaining for 2023/24 is £9.45 million, which the Board will bridge via:

- ▶ Savings to be delivered in-year of £2.49 million;
- ▶ Use of £2.4 million of earmarked reserves; and
- ▶ A drawdown from reserves of £4.562 million.

The IJB estimates that General Reserves will fall significantly below target in 2023/24

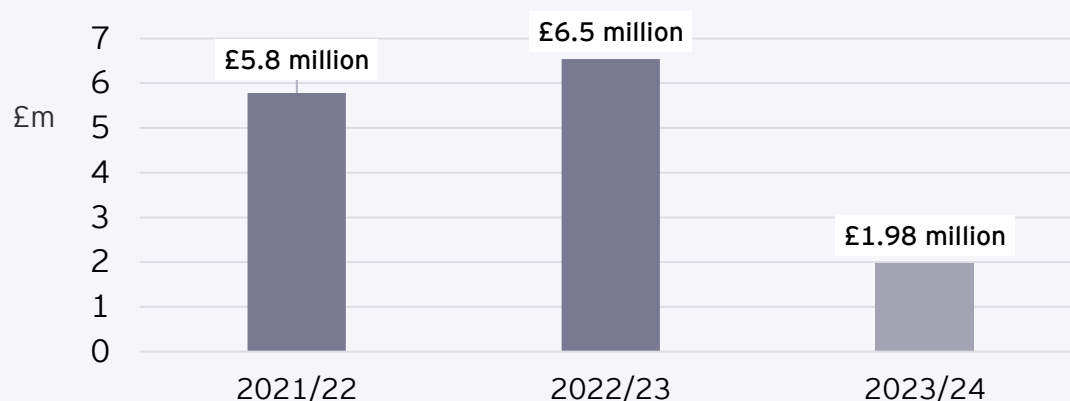
The IJB has set a target for its uncommitted General Reserve of 2% of net expenditure.

The IJB's General Reserves increased by £0.76 million in 2022/23 as a result of the underspend in the delivery of operational services. As a result, as at 31 March 2022, the IJB's uncommitted reserve was £6.54 million, representing around 2% of net expenditure.

Using the current projections, Exhibit 6 highlights that the Board anticipate that General Reserves will fall to £1.98 million by 31 March 2024. This would result in an estimated closing balance of around 0.5% of net expenditure, significantly below the Board's reserves target. Reserves of this level will impact the Board's ability to manage overspends in future years.

We also note that key areas of risk remain in 2023/24, and there is therefore a risk that the Board's General Reserve balances will be exhausted in the short term.

Exhibit 6: The IJB anticipates that General Reserves will fall to £1.98 million by March 2024



| The IJB has established a Sustainable Futures programme to respond to the financial position

In March 2023, the Board approved the establishment of a Sustainable Futures programme to ensure that the resources available to the health and social care partnership are used effectively to deliver the Strategic Plan 2022-25, and to take steps towards financial sustainability.

The IJB has noted that the scope to deliver additional further recurring savings has increasingly been limited. Any further efficiency savings would therefore require to come from staffing measures, impacting frontline service delivery. As a result, three core areas of work have been identified within the initial scope to review arrangements and identify transformational reform:

- ▶ **Savings and Best Value:** encompassing reviews of charging, contract management and prescribing;
- ▶ **Consistency in service access and delivery:** considering eligibility criteria and package and support models; and
- ▶ **Responding to changing demand for Older Peoples services:** including residential care and care at home provision.

Work has begun to establish the programme management and governance arrangements and will be considered at the IJB's meeting in September 2023. This will include a programme of engagement with service users and other key stakeholders.

Each Head of Service has responsibility for one of the areas. The operational arrangements include the establishment of a Programme Management Office consisting of redirected Change and Improvement staff to support and report on the progress of reviews.

Due to the stage of development of the programme, the IJB has not yet identified projected savings to be delivered by Sustainable Futures. We also note that the Board considers that it is unlikely that the areas identified within the scope of the current programme will deliver a degree of savings sufficient to bridge the IJB's projected budget gap in future years. Further savings proposals are therefore expected to be required.

| Recommendation 2: There is a risk that due to the level of uncertainty that the IJB is operating in, the IJB's General Reserves will be exhausted in the short term. There is therefore a need to work with partners and the Scottish Government to develop a clear understanding of the impact of the current funding position for sustainability of services.

Vision, Leadership and Governance



Our overall assessment: Green

Governance arrangements are established and worked well throughout 2022/23.

The Annual Governance Statement highlights work underway with partners to reform service delivery. There were no weaknesses in governance or internal control that were required to be reported within the Annual Governance Statement. The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee will consider their arrangements against updated good practice guidance in 2023/24. The Board also updated arrangements to ensure that they fully comply with their Equality Duties in the year.

The IJB has approved an updated Strategic Plan for 2022-25

In March 2022, the IJB approved its updated Strategic Plan for the period 2022-25. During 2022, further work was undertaken to develop and implement a strategic delivery plan for 2022/23. The Board's Strategic Planning Group play a key role in monitoring the delivery, and the rationale for actions that have had to be postponed.

Progress against the key actions within the annual delivery plan have been reported as part of the IJB's Annual Performance Report and work is underway to finalise an achievable strategic delivery plan for 2023/24 by September 2023.

The Strategic Plan is supported by the Medium Term Financial Plan, including the range of actions in place to support the Board's financial position. This includes the Sustainable Futures programme, and a review of the property used in the delivery of services. In addition, in November 2022, the IJB also approved the Workforce Strategy, following review by the Scottish Government.

The Annual Governance Statement demonstrates that it has the key requirements for good governance in place

The key aspects of the IJB's governance arrangements are required to be disclosed in the Annual Governance Statement within the financial statements. We reviewed the governance statement against the requirements outlined in the CIPFA framework for *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*, and against our understanding of the Board's arrangements in the period to 31 March 2023.

We were satisfied that it was consistent with both the governance framework, key findings from relevant audit activity and management's assessment of its own compliance with the CIPFA framework.

Like all other public bodies in Scotland, the IJB moved to revised governance arrangements at the beginning of the UK lockdown period. The majority of additional governance arrangements were stood down in 2022/23, with the exception of the Strategic Executive Group and Chief Officers Tactical Group to share information. Committee meetings have continued to operate throughout 2022/23. We were satisfied that there was an appropriate level of challenge and scrutiny at meetings throughout the year.

| The IJB's Chief Internal Auditor identified no unsatisfactory or limited assurance opinions during 2022/23

The IJB's Chief Internal Auditor presented their annual report to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in June 2023. The report noted that the three reviews planned for 2022/23 were complete, but that the review of risk management had not yet been finalised. We note that any recommendations arising from this review will be reflected in a planned review of the Board's Risk Management Framework.

In 2022/23 there were no unsatisfactory audit opinions issued in relation to the IJB and as a result, the Chief Internal Auditor concluded that "a reasonable level of assurance can be given that the system of internal control, risk management and governance is operating effectively within the organisation."

The annual report also summarises the outcome of reviews at partner bodies where there may be an impact on the work of the IJB or Health and Social Care Partnership. No significant matters were highlighted as a result of this work.

There were no outstanding recommendations that required to be followed up during 2022/23.

| The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee should self-assess it's arrangements against updated good practice guidance

In October 2022, CIPFA updated its guidance on good practice for local authority audit committees. At Renfrewshire IJB, the role of the audit committee is fulfilled by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee.

There has been no formal self-assessment of the arrangements against the CIPFA guidance which may identify improvements. For example, we note that the good practice guidance suggests separating the roles of the audit committee and scrutiny function.

In our view, a self-assessment would help to support the governance framework outlined within the Annual Governance Statement.

| Recommendation 3: The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee should review its arrangements against updated good practice guidance.

| The IJB has established an action plan to ensure it fully meets the Public Sector Equality Duty

In December 2022, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) wrote to the IJB to confirm that the Board has complied with its duties to publish a Mainstreaming Report, set of Equality Outcomes and Equality Outcomes Progress Report. However, an issue was highlighted on compliance with the duty to publish Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) relating to policies and practices.

In December 2022, EHRC requested that the IJB review their processes and develop an agreed functioning EQIA system which demonstrates how these duties will be met and reviewed going forward. In response, the IJB established a local action plan and was able to demonstrate compliance to the EHRC by 31 March 2023.

We will continue to assess the Board's arrangements to comply with equality duties throughout the term of our appointment.

Use of resources



Our overall assessment: Green

The IJB has a well-developed approach in place to monitor and report on key areas of performance, and was able to demonstrate key areas of improvement in 2022/23 despite the ongoing impact of the pandemic and significant financial challenges.

The IJB has, however, highlighted that the financial position places significant risk on the future delivery of services at the same levels.

The IJB regularly reports on its performance

A comprehensive Performance Framework is in place both operationally by the Strategic Planning Group, and for the Board on a 6-monthly basis.

In September 2022, the Board agreed a Performance Scorecard, including a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to report on progress against the aims of the revised Strategic Plan.

We also note that the Board considered a separate report on the Ministerial Strategic Group's unscheduled care performance indicators.

The 2022/23 report noted that unscheduled care performance has improved when compared to the pre-pandemic year in 2019/20. The report also outlined a range of initiatives being progressed by the Health and Social Care Partnership to reduce delayed discharges, emergency admissions and attendances at the Accident and Emergency Department.

The Annual Performance Report highlights key achievements and challenges across Priority Activities

The IJB considered its Annual Performance Report in July 2023, in line with statutory requirements. The report is published on the HSCP's website and is structured to align with the Performance Scorecard and the five key themes within the Strategic Plan:

- ▶ Healthier futures
- ▶ Connected futures
- ▶ Enabled futures
- ▶ Empowered futures; and
- ▶ Sustainable futures.

The Annual Performance Report includes performance against target, but also highlights the direction of travel for each indicator, and plans for improvement where performance is lower than expected.

Key achievements in 2022/23 include:

- ▶ The launch of a pilot for the Home First Response Service, to adopt a whole system approach for the management and assessment of frailty;
- ▶ The establishment of Community Link Workers for all GP Practices in Renfrewshire; and
- ▶ The establishment of 12 new treatment rooms to ensure residents receive the right care in the right place.

| The IJB is on track to deliver 85% of the actions planned within the Strategic Delivery Plan

Exhibit 7 highlights that the IJB delivered 105 of the 120 targets that it set for 2022/23.

Areas that are not on track for completion include:

- ▶ The development of a Dementia Strategy, which has been paused due to the delay of a national strategy;
- ▶ The development of a Governance and Resourcing Plan to respond to National Care Service proposals will be updated alongside national timescales; and
- ▶ The planned refresh of the Participation, Engagement and Communication Strategy has been delayed due to resource prioritisation.

Alongside the Strategic Plan, the IJB monitors progress against Renfrewshire's Performance Scorecard. The Scorecard considers performance against national, NHS Board and local key performance indicators, and the National Core Integration Indicator.

The Performance Scorecard (Appendix 1 in the Annual Performance Report) highlights

12 red indicators where performance is more than 10% from target.

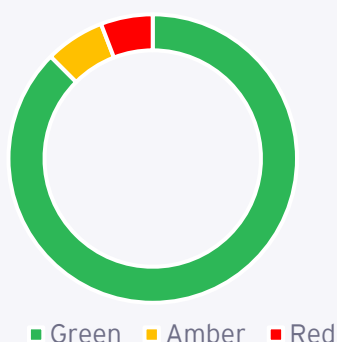
These include:

- ▶ The percentage of children seen within 18 weeks for paediatric speech and language therapy (35.7% against a target of 95%)
- ▶ Sickness absence rates for social work staff (22.59 days against a target of 15.3 days; and
- ▶ The percentage of patients who started treatment within 18 weeks of referral to Psychological Therapies (70% against a target of 90%).

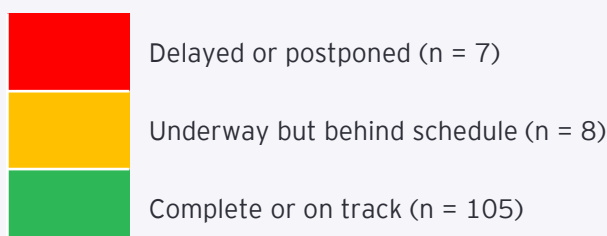
Overall, performance was on track for 21 (53%) of the 39 Performance Scorecard indicators.

We note that the number of delayed discharge bed days lost in 2022-23 decreased by 23% to 7,066, compared with 9,177 for 2021-22. This equated to a rate of 93 per 100,000 population. The report stated that the national average rate at March 2023 was 874.

Exhibit 7: The IJB delivered over 85% of planned actions in 2022/23



Definition within the Annual Performance Report



| The IJB has highlighted significant and ongoing financial risks within its risk registers

The Audit and Risk Committee receives a quarterly update on the key strategic risks facing the Board. Two risks are scored as at the highest rating available, both of which are related to the Board's financial position:

- ▶ Changing financial and demographic pressures; and
- ▶ Financial challenges causing financial instability for the IJB.

| Plans to develop a National Care Service have been delayed

On 17 April 2023, the Scottish Government formally requested and agreed an extension to the Stage 1 deadline for the creation of a National Care Service beyond June 2023. The Scottish Government committed to focusing on continued engagement and co-design activities.

The Finance and Public Administration Committee requested a new timetable for completion of Stage 1 and a revised Financial Memorandum. It is expected that the revised Financial Memorandum will include a detailed breakdown on spend to date on the National Care Service including costs arising from the provisions of Bill and those of the wider programme.

In May 2023, the Scottish Government announced that a range of regional co-design events would take place between June and August 2023 and supplemented with additional local engagement activity to progress the development. However, Stage 1 of the Bill was further extended to 31 January 2024 through a motion agreed by Parliament in June 2023.

It is not clear at this stage if the expected operational start date of 2026 will be impacted.

Best Value



Our overall assessment: Amber

In our view, the IJB's performance management and financial reporting arrangements allow the Board to demonstrate the achievement of Best Value.

The Board has established a reform programme, Sustainable Futures, to address key areas of challenge and deliver savings. It has, however, acknowledged that further efficiency savings are likely to be required which may impact frontline services.

Basis for our assessment

As auditor to the IJB, we are required to comment on how effectively, in our view, the IJB demonstrates that it meets its Best Value responsibilities. As we noted in our Annual Audit Plan, the conclusions that we reach on the wider scope areas contribute to this consideration. We expect to develop our understanding of how the IJB meets its Best Value responsibilities over the course of our appointment.

Our assessment in 2022/23 therefore reflects the work conducted to support our wider scope responsibilities, and specifically:

- ▶ Documentation review and fieldwork interviews with senior officers;
- ▶ Our consideration of the IJB's financial planning processes including the most recent Medium Term Financial Plan and budget monitoring reports;
- ▶ Governance arrangements, including monitoring reports on the use of resources and scrutiny arrangements;
- ▶ Our assessment of performance reporting to the Board; and
- ▶ The IJB's revised Strategic Plan and the Workforce Plan.

The IJB can demonstrate that it has the key elements needed to deliver Best Value in place

The IJB has reviewed and updated its Strategic Plan, along with the frameworks that will support delivery, including the Medium Term Financial Plan and Workforce Strategy. Plans are in place to review and update it's arrangements for public engagement and consultation with key stakeholders.

It has a well-developed Performance Framework in place and we noted evidence of effective scrutiny arrangements throughout the year.

We do, however, note that the IJB's financial position is increasingly challenging, and there are risks and uncertainties outside the IJB's control which could impact the ability to deliver savings.

The Board has established a reform programme, Sustainable Futures, to address key areas of challenge and deliver savings. It has, however, acknowledged that further efficiency savings are likely to be required which may impact the ability to deliver frontline services at the same level.

| Appendices

A

Code of audit practice:
Responsibilities

B

Independence report

C

Required communications with
the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny
Committee

D

Timeline of communications and
deliverables

E

Action Plan

F

Adjusted and unadjusted
differences

G

Audit fees

H

Additional audit information

Audited body responsibilities

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. The features of proper financial stewardship include the following:

Corporate governance

Each body, through its chief executive or accountable officer, is responsible for establishing arrangements to ensure the proper conduct of its affairs including the legality of activities and transactions, and for monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements. Audited bodies should involve those charged with governance (including audit committees or equivalent) in monitoring these arrangements.

Financial statements and related reports

Audited bodies must prepare annual accounts comprising financial statements and other related reports. They have responsibility for:

- ▶ Preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of their financial position and their expenditure and income, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and relevant legislation.
- ▶ Maintaining accounting records and working papers that have been prepared to an acceptable professional standard and that support their accounts and related reports disclosures.
- ▶ Ensuring the regularity of transactions, by putting in place systems of internal control to ensure that they are in accordance with the appropriate authority.

- ▶ Preparing and publishing, along with their financial statements, related reports such as an annual governance statement, management commentary (or equivalent) and a remuneration report in accordance with prescribed requirements.
- ▶ Ensuring that the management commentary (or equivalent) is fair, balanced and understandable.

It is the responsibility of management of an audited body, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to communicate relevant information to users about the entity and its financial performance, including providing adequate disclosures in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The relevant information should be communicated clearly and concisely.

Audited bodies are responsible for developing and implementing effective systems of internal control as well as financial, operational and compliance controls. These systems should support the achievement of their objectives and safeguard and secure value for money from the public funds at their disposal. They are also responsible for establishing effective and appropriate internal audit and risk-management functions.

Standards of conduct for prevention and detection of fraud and error

Audited bodies are responsible for establishing arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and irregularities, bribery and corruption and to ensure that their affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of conduct by putting proper arrangements in place.

A

Code of audit practice: Responsibilities (cont.)

Maintaining a sound financial position

Audited bodies are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that their financial position is soundly based having regard to:

- ▶ Such financial monitoring and reporting arrangements as may be specified.
- ▶ Compliance with any statutory financial requirements and achievement of financial targets.
- ▶ Balances and reserves, including strategies about levels and their future use.
- ▶ How they plan to deal with uncertainty in the medium and longer term.
- ▶ The impact of reporting future policies and foreseeable developments on their financial position.

Responsibilities for best value, community reporting and performance

Local government bodies have a duty to make arrangements to secure best value. best value is defined as continuous improvement in the performance of the body's functions. In securing best value, the local government body is required to maintain an appropriate balance among:

- ▶ The quality of its performance of its functions.
- ▶ The cost to the body of that performance.
- ▶ The cost to persons of any service provided by it for them on a wholly or partly rechargeable basis.

In maintaining that balance, the local government body shall have regard to:

- ▶ Efficiency.
- ▶ Effectiveness.
- ▶ Economy.
- ▶ The need to meet the equal opportunity requirements.

The local government body shall discharge its duties under this section in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

In measuring the improvement of the performance of a local government body's functions for the purposes of this section, regard shall be had to the extent to which the outcomes of that performance have improved.

The Scottish Government's Statutory Guidance on best value (2020) requires bodies to demonstrate that they are delivering best value in respect of seven themes:

1. Vision and leadership
2. Governance and accountability
3. Effective use of resources
4. Partnerships and collaborative working
5. Working with communities
6. Sustainability
7. Fairness and equality

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 is designed to help empower community bodies through the ownership or control of land and buildings, and by strengthening their voices in decisions about public services.

Specified audited bodies are required to prepare and publish performance information in accordance with Directions issued by the Accounts Commission.

Internal audit

Public sector bodies are required to establish an internal audit function as a support to management in maintaining effective systems of control and performance. With the exception of less complex public bodies the internal audit programme of work is expected to comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Internal audit and external audit have differing roles and responsibilities. External auditors may seek to rely on the work of internal audit as appropriate.

Appointed auditors' responsibilities

Appointed auditors' statutory duties for local government bodies are contained within Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended.

These are to:

- ▶ Audit the accounts and place a certificate (i.e., an independent auditor's report) on the accounts stating that the audit has been conducted in accordance with Part VII of the Act.
- ▶ Satisfy themselves, by examination of the accounts and otherwise, that:
 - ▶ The accounts have been prepared in accordance with all applicable statutory requirements.
 - ▶ Proper accounting practices have been observed in the preparation of the accounts.
- ▶ The body has made proper arrangements for securing best value and is complying with its community reporting duties.
- ▶ Hear any objection to the financial statements lodged by an interested person.

Appointed auditors should also be familiar with the statutory reporting responsibilities in section 102 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, including those relating to the audit of the accounts of a local government body.

B Independence report

Introduction

The FRC Ethical Standard and ISA (UK) 260 'Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance', requires us to communicate with you on a timely basis on all significant facts and matters that bear upon our integrity, objectivity and independence. The Ethical Standard, as revised in December 2019, requires that we communicate formally both at the reporting stage and at the conclusion of the audit, as well as during the course of the audit if appropriate. The aim is to ensure full and fair disclosure by us to those charged with your governance on matters in which you have an interest.

During the course of the audit, we are required to communicate with you whenever any significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place, for example, when accepting an engagement to provide non-audit services.

We ensure that the total amount of fees that EY charged to you for the provision of services during the period, analysed in appropriate categories, are disclosed.

Required Communications

Planning Stage

- ▶ The principal threats, if any, to objectivity and independence identified by EY including consideration of all relationships between you, your directors and us.
- ▶ The safeguards adopted and the reasons why they are considered to be effective, including any Engagement Quality review.
- ▶ The overall assessment of threats and safeguards.
- ▶ Information about the general policies and process within EY to maintain objectivity and independence.

Final Stage

- ▶ To allow you to assess the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm and each covered person, we are required to provide a written disclosure of relationships (including the provision of non-audit services) that may bear on our integrity, objectivity and independence. This is required to have regard to relationships with the entity, its directors and senior management, and its connected parties and the threats to integrity or objectivity, including those that could compromise independence that these create. We are also required to disclose any safeguards that we have put in place and why they address such threats, together with any other information necessary to enable our objectivity and independence to be assessed.
- ▶ Details of non-audit/additional services provided and the fees charged in relation thereto.
- ▶ Written confirmation that the firm and each covered person is independent and, if applicable, that any non-EY firms used in the group audit or external experts used have confirmed their independence to us.
- ▶ Details of all breaches of the IESBA Code of Ethics, the FRC Ethical Standard and professional standards, and of any safeguards applied and actions taken by EY to address any threats to independence.
- ▶ Details of any inconsistencies between FRC Ethical Standard and your policy for the supply of non-audit services by EY and any apparent breach of that policy.
- ▶ An opportunity to discuss auditor independence issues.

We confirm that we have undertaken client and engagement continuance procedures, including our assessment of our independence to act as your external auditor. We have identified no relationships that impact the audit of Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board.



Required communications

We have detailed below the communications that we must provide to the Board.

Our reporting to you

Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Terms of engagement	Confirmation by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee of acceptance of terms of engagement as written in the engagement letter signed by both parties.	Audit Scotland Terms of Appointment letter (December 2022) - audit to be undertaken in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice.
Our responsibilities	Reminder of our responsibilities as set out in the engagement letter.	Annual Audit Plan - March 2023
Reporting and audit approach	Communication of the reporting scope and timing of the audit, any limitations and the significant risks identified. When communicating key audit matters this includes the most significant risks of material misstatement (whether or not due to fraud) including those that have the greatest effect on the overall audit strategy, the allocation of resources in the audit and directing the efforts of the engagement team.	Annual Audit Plan - March 2023
Significant findings from the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures.▶ Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit.▶ Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management.▶ Written representations that we are seeking.▶ Expected modifications to the audit report.▶ Other matters if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process.▶ Findings and issues regarding the opening balance on initial audits.	This Annual Audit Report.

C

Required communications (cont.)

		Our reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Going concern	<p>Events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty ▶ Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements ▶ The adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements 	This Annual Audit Report.
Misstatements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion, unless prohibited by law or regulation. ▶ The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods. ▶ A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected. ▶ Corrected misstatements that are significant. ▶ Material misstatements corrected by management. 	This Annual Audit Report.
Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enquiries of the audit committee to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity. ▶ Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that a fraud may exist. ▶ A discussion of any other matters related to fraud. 	This Annual Audit Report.
Internal controls	Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit.	This Annual Audit Report.

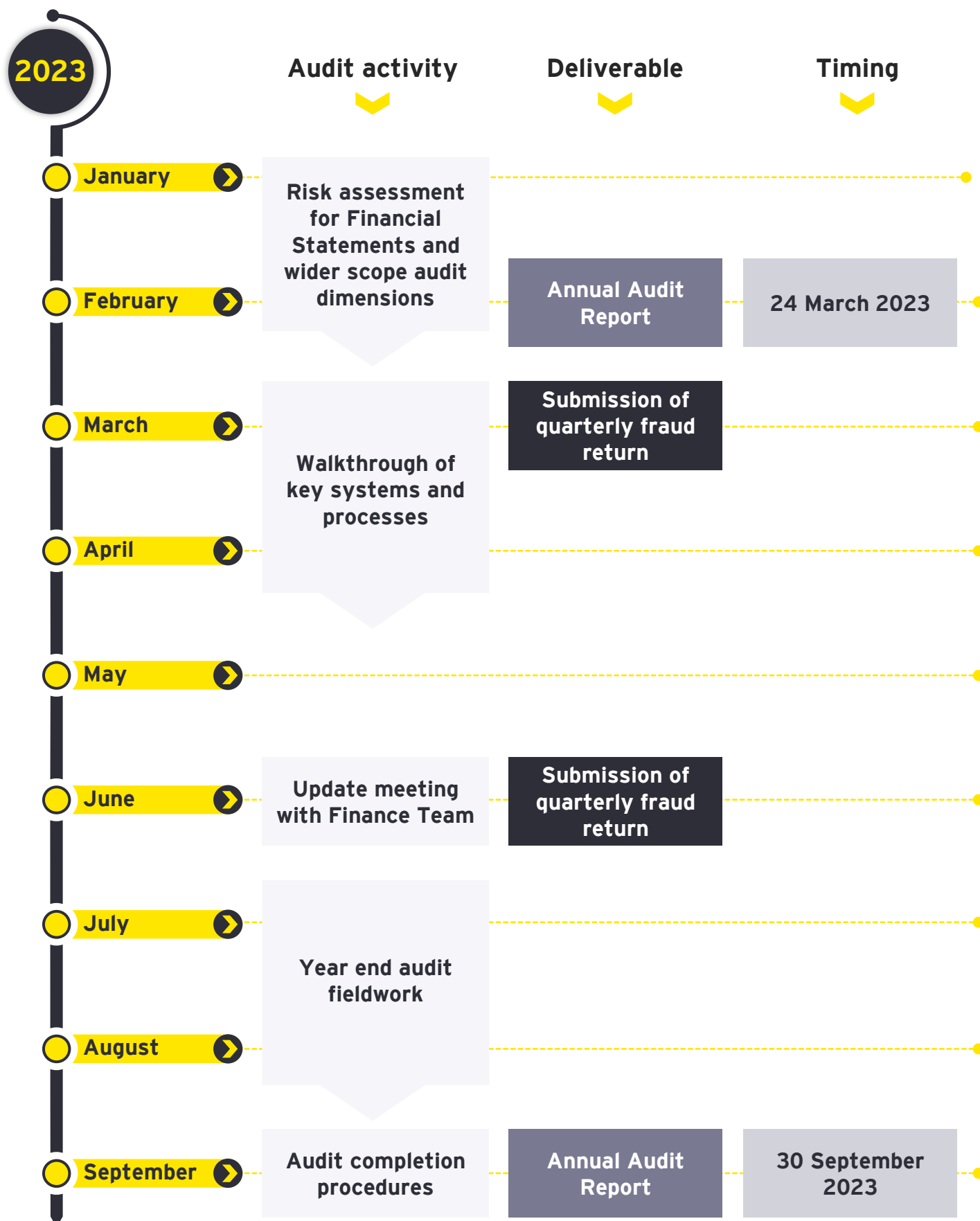
C Required communications (cont.)

		Our reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Related parties	<p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity's related parties including, when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Non-disclosure by management ▶ Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions ▶ Disagreement over disclosures ▶ Non-compliance with laws and regulations ▶ Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity 	This Annual Audit Report.
Independence	<p>Communication of all significant facts and matters that bear on EY's, and all individuals involved in the audit, objectivity and independence.</p> <p>Communication of key elements of the audit engagement partner's consideration of independence and objectivity such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The principal threats ▶ Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness ▶ An overall assessment of threats and safeguards ▶ Information about the general policies and process within the firm to maintain objectivity and independence 	Annual Audit Plan and this Annual Audit Report.
External confirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Management's refusal for us to request confirmations. ▶ Inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures. 	This Annual Audit Report.
Representations	Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance.	This Annual Audit Report.

C Required communications (cont.)

		Our reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Consideration of laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Audit findings regarding non-compliance where the non-compliance is material and believed to be intentional. This communication is subject to compliance with legislation on tipping off. ▶ Enquiry of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee may be aware of. 	This Annual Audit Report.
Material inconsistencies and misstatements	Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise.	This Annual Audit Report.
Auditors report	Any circumstances identified that affect the form and content of our auditor's report.	This Annual Audit Report.
Best value and wider scope judgements and conclusions	Our reporting will include a clear narrative that explains what we found and the auditor's judgement in respect of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the arrangements that audited bodies have in place regarding the wider-scope audit.	This Annual Audit Report.
Key audit matters	The requirement for auditors to communicate key audit matters, which apply to listed companies and entities which have adopted the UK Corporate Governance Code in the private sector, applies to annual audit reports prepared under the Code.	This Annual Audit Report.

D Timeline of communication and deliverables



E Action Plan

We include an action plan to summarise specific recommendations included elsewhere within this Annual Audit Report. We grade these findings according to our consideration of their priority for the Board or management to action.

Classification of recommendations

Grade 1: Key risks and / or significant deficiencies which are critical to the achievement of strategic objectives. Consequently management needs to address and seek resolution urgently.

Grade 2: Risks or potential weaknesses which impact on individual objectives, or impact the operation of a single process, and so require prompt but not immediate action by management.

Grade 3: Less significant issues and / or areas for improvement which we consider merit attention but do not require to be prioritised by management.

No.	Findings and / or risk	Recommendation / grading	Management response / Implementation timeframe
1.	<p>Hosted Services</p> <p>Renfrewshire IJB hosts a small number of services on behalf of other IJBs within the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. The current process for reporting on hosted services is based on out of date arrangements and the Chief Finance Officer will therefore work with partners to agree a revised process for 2023/24 onwards</p>	<p>The Board should agree an updated approach to report on hosted services activity. This should include the IJB's audit trail requirements to support the disclosure in the financial statements.</p> <p>Grade 2</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>The CFO will work with the other five CFOs across Greater Glasgow and Clyde to develop a revised process for reporting on hosted services activity.</p> <p>Responsible officer:</p> <p>Chief Finance Officer</p> <p>Implementation date:</p> <p>31 March 2024.</p>

E Action Plan

No.	Findings and / or risk	Recommendation / grading	Management response / Implementation timeframe
2.	<p>Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <p>While the Board has established the Sustainable Futures programme to support the delivery of the MTFP, we note that further efficiency savings are likely to be required. The MTFP is not yet supported by a balanced financial plan and the IJB's General Reserves are at risk of being exhausted in the short term. There is therefore a need to work with partners and the Scottish Government to develop a clear understanding of the impact of the current funding position for sustainability of our services.</p>	<p>The IJB should work with partners to ensure that medium term financial plan is realistic and sustainable via the achievement of savings, or support from additional funding.</p> <p>Grade 1</p>	<p>Response: The planned increase of 4% per year in real terms for health and social care over the next four years - as proposed in the Scottish Government's Medium Term Financial Strategy - is a much-needed improvement on the previously planned 0.6% over four years in 2022, and the general trend of growth in health spending in Scotland is welcomed. Nonetheless, the spiralling cost of resourcing and delivering health and social care services whilst simultaneously supporting Covid-19 recovery, and planning for fundamental and systemic change in the structure of social care delivery in Scotland, presents ongoing financial challenges which a real terms rise of 4% per year may not be sufficient to address. As such, and alongside delivery of the MTFP supported by the Sustainable Futures programme, Renfrewshire IJB will continue to actively engage with partners and the Scottish Government to ensure there is a shared understanding of the pressures on our financial sustainability and to petition for the maximum level of funding possible to continue to support safe and effective service delivery.</p> <p>Responsible Officer: Chief Officer & Chief Finance Officer.]</p> <p>Implementation date: Ongoing</p>

E Action Plan continued

No.	Findings and / or risk	Recommendation / grading	Management response / Implementation timeframe
3.	<p>Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>In October 2022, CIPFA updated its guidance on good practice for local authority audit committees. The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee has not yet considered it's arrangements against the guidance.</p>	<p>The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee should conduct a self-assessment against updated good practice guidance for local government audit committees.</p> <p>Grade 3</p>	<p>Response: The CIA was aware of, and considered, the guidance at a high level and are of the opinion that IJB Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee broadly complies with the new guidance. However, the CIA also recognises that there are some gaps, and some areas that needed to be explored further through a self-assessment involving the members of the Committee, the CIA plans to facilitate this self-assessment. As such, it was appropriate to continue to make reference to the CIPFA's Audit Committee Principles in Local Authorities in Scotland and Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities for the 22/23 governance statement. The CIA will be submitting a report to the September Committee which will advise members of the revised guidance and seek their approval of a date for a development session to undertake this self-assessment. Subject to member approval of a suitable date, the CIA would hope to have the self-assessment completed by the end of this calendar year, with an action plan being reported to the Committee thereafter.</p> <p>Responsible officer: Chief Internal Auditor</p> <p>Implementation date: 31 March 2024</p>

F Adjusted and unadjusted differences

This appendix sets out the adjustments that were processed as part of finalisation of the financial statements. There were no unadjusted differences.

Disclosure misstatements that have been corrected

No.	Note	Description
1	Note 12: Services Hosted by other HSCPs	Renfrewshire IJB's consumption of services hosted by other Integration Joint Boards was understated by £1.6 million in the unaudited accounts. In Note 12 (Services Hosted by other HSCPs), Renfrewshire IJB's consumption of oral health services was understated by £0.1 million and its consumption of learning disability services was understated by £1.5 million. This disclosure note is presented for information only and has a nil impact on the IJB's financial outturn for the year.

Prior year disclosure misstatements that have been corrected

No.	Section	Description
1	Remuneration Report	The prior year full year equivalent for the Chief Officer's remuneration was restated as a result of a prior year error. This was updated in the 22/23 unaudited accounts, with the difference being £5,141. The in-year pension contributions were similarly updated. The difference was £1,089.

G Audit Fees

2022/23 Fees

The Board's audit fee is determined in line with Audit Scotland's fee setting arrangements. Audit Scotland will notify auditors about the expected fees each year following submission of Audit Scotland's budget to the Scottish Commission for Public Audit, normally in December. The remuneration rate used to calculate fees is increased annually based on Audit Scotland's scale uplift.

	2022/23	2021/22
Component of fee:		
▶ Auditor remuneration - expected fee	£33,190	
Audit Scotland fixed charges:		
▶ Performance audit and best value	£6,310	
▶ Audit support costs	£1,260	
Sectoral price cap	(£9,290)	
Total fee	£31,470	£27,960

As we outlined in our audit planning report, the expected fee for auditor remuneration, set by Audit Scotland, is based on a risk assessment of publicly available information from the 2021 tender exercise. It assumes that the IJB has well-functioning controls, an effective internal audit service, and an average risk profile and governance risks. This is the basis for the estimated level of time and skill mix involvement by auditors.

Throughout the course of their work, auditors may identify new, developing or otherwise enhanced areas of risk that are required to be addressed to deliver an audit to the quality standards expected, and in line with the requirements of the Audit Scotland Code of Practice.

As expected, we have encountered challenges in the first year of the audit, including additional work around prior year and other disclosures that are unique to the IJB. We will hold a debrief with management to ensure all lessons are learned for future years to ensure that the audit continues to run smoothly.

H Additional audit information

Introduction

In addition to the key areas of audit focus outlined within the Report, we have to perform other procedures as required by auditing, ethical and independence standards and other regulations. We outline the procedures below that we will undertake during the course of our audit.

Our responsibilities under auditing standards

- ▶ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.
- ▶ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Board's internal control.
- ▶ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ▶ Conclude on the appropriateness of the going concern basis of accounting.
- ▶ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- ▶ Read other information contained in the financial statements, the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee reporting appropriately addresses matters

communicated by us to the Committee and reporting whether it is materially inconsistent with our understanding and the financial statements.

- ▶ Maintaining auditor independence.

Purpose and evaluation of materiality

- ▶ For the purposes of determining whether the accounts are free from material error, we define materiality as the magnitude of an omission or misstatement that, individually or in the aggregate, in light of the surrounding circumstances, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of the users of the financial statements. Our evaluation of it requires professional judgement and necessarily takes into account qualitative as well as quantitative considerations implicit in the definition. We would be happy to discuss with you your expectations regarding our detection of misstatements in the financial statements.
- ▶ Materiality determines the locations at which we conduct audit procedures and the level of work performed on individual account balances and financial statement disclosures.
- ▶ The amount we consider material at the end of the audit may differ from our initial determination. At this stage it is not feasible to anticipate all of the circumstances that may ultimately influence our judgement about materiality. At the end of the audit we will form our final opinion by reference to all matters that could be significant to users of the accounts, including the total effect of the audit misstatements we identify, and our evaluation of materiality at that date.

H Additional audit information (cont.)

Audit Quality Framework/Annual Audit Quality Report

- ▶ Audit Scotland are responsible for applying the Audit Quality Framework across all audits. This covers the quality of audit work undertaken by Audit Scotland staff and appointed firms. The team responsible are independent of audit delivery and provide assurance on audit quality to the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission.
- ▶ We support reporting on audit quality by providing additional information including the results of internal quality reviews undertaken on our public sector audits. The most recent audit quality report can be found at: <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/publications/quality-of-public-audit-in-scotland-annual-report-202122>
- ▶ EY has policies and procedures that instil professional values as part of firm culture and ensure that the highest standards of objectivity, independence and integrity are maintained. Details can be found in our annual Transparency Report: https://www.ey.com/en_uk/about-us/transparency-report

This report

This report has been prepared in accordance with Terms of Appointment Letter from Audit Scotland through which the Accounts Commission has appointed us as external auditor of Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board for financial years 2022/23 to 2026/27.

This report is for the benefit of the Board and is made available to the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland (together the Recipients).

This report has not been designed to be of benefit to anyone except the Recipients. In preparing this report we have not taken into account the interests, needs or circumstances of anyone apart from the Recipients, even though we may have been aware that others might read this report.

Any party other than the Recipients that obtains access to this report or a copy (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, through a Recipient's Publication Scheme or otherwise) and chooses to rely on this report (or any part of it) does so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Ernst & Young LLP does not assume any responsibility and will not accept any liability in respect of this report to any party other than the Recipients.

Complaints

If at any time you would like to discuss with us how our service to you could be improved, or if you are dissatisfied with the service you are receiving, you may take the issue up with Stephen Reid who is our partner responsible for services under appointment by Audit Scotland, telephone 0131 777 2839, email sreid2@uk.ey.com. If you prefer an alternative route, please contact Hywel Ball, our Managing Partner, 1 More London Place, London SE1 2AF. We undertake to look into any complaint carefully and promptly and to do all we can to explain the position to you.

Should you remain dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, or with how your complaint has been handled, you can refer the matter to Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh, EH3 9DN. Alternatively you may of course take matters up with our professional institute. We can provide further information on how you may contact our professional institute.

EY | Building a better working world

EY exists to build a better working world, helping to create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets.

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Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.

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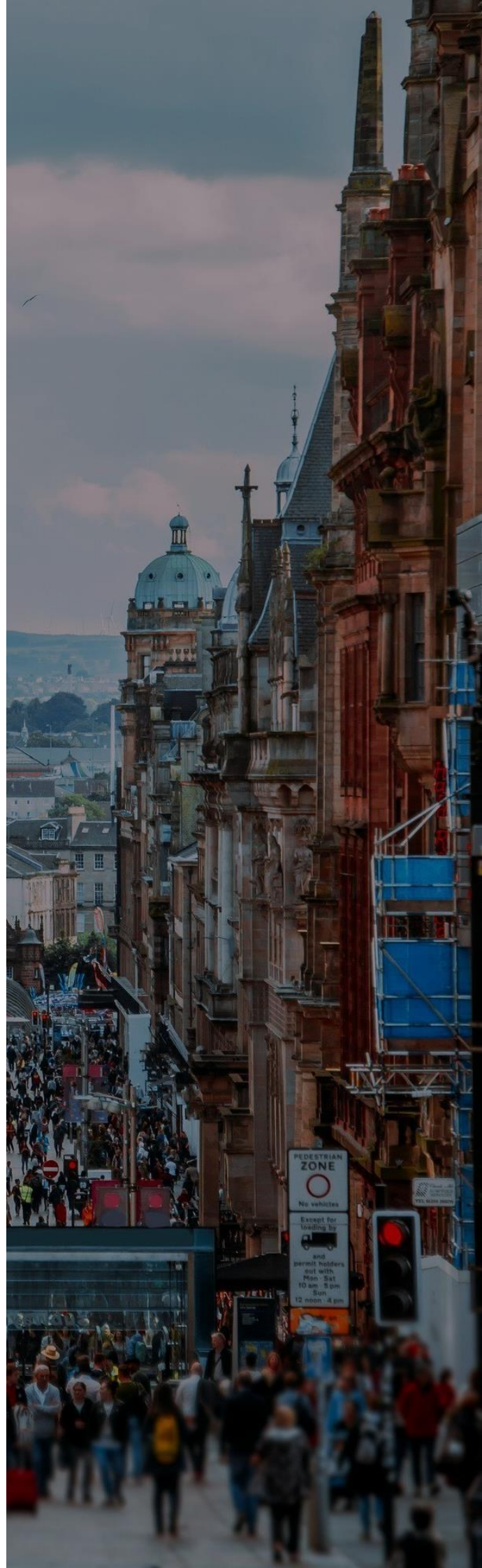
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ey.com/uk



Date: 18 September 2023
Our Ref: SL/JH
Your Ref:
Enquiries: Sarah Lavers
Tel: 0141 487 2888

Ernst & Young
5 George Square
Glasgow
G2 1DY

Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board Annual Accounts 2022/23

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board ("the IJB") for the year ended 31 March 2023. We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the IJB's financial position as of 31 March 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), which involves an examination of the accounting system, internal control and related data to the extent you considered necessary in the circumstances, and is not designed to identify - nor necessarily be expected to disclose - all fraud, shortages, errors and other irregularities, should any exist.

Accordingly, we make the following representations, which are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

A. Financial Statements and Financial Records

We have fulfilled our responsibilities, as set out in the terms of the audit engagement letter dated 14 December 2022, for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, Section 12 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, and CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

1. We acknowledge, as members of management of the IJB, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the financial statements referred to above give a true and fair view of the financial position, financial performance (or results of operations) and cash flows of the IJB in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the financial statements.

HSCP Management Offices, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AL

2. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.
3. As members of management of the IJB, we believe that the IJB has a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. We have disclosed to you any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that we have made to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our system of internal controls.

There are no unadjusted audit differences identified during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented.

4. We confirm the IJB does not have securities (debt or equity) listed on a recognised exchange.

B. Non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud

We acknowledge that we are responsible to determine that the IJB's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible to identify and address any non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
2. 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.
3. We have no knowledge of any identified or suspected non-compliance with laws or regulations, including fraud that may have affected the IJB (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers"), including non-compliance matters:
 - involving financial improprieties;
 - related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the IJB's financial statements;
 - related to laws and regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the IJB's activities, its ability to continue to operate, or to avoid material penalties;
 - involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal controls, or others; or
 - in relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other non-compliance with laws and regulations communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

C. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions

1. We have provided you with:
 - Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
 - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and all material transactions, events and conditions are reflected in the financial statements, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the IJB and Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on the following date: 29 September 2023.
4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the IJB's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.
5. We believe that the methods, significant assumptions and the data we used in making accounting estimates and related disclosures are appropriate and consistently applied to achieve recognition, measurement and disclosure that is in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.
6. We have disclosed to you, and the IJB has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.
7. From 1 April 2022 through the date of this letter we have disclosed to you, to the extent that we are aware, any (1) unauthorized access to our information technology systems that either occurred or to the best of our knowledge is reasonably likely to have occurred based on our investigation, including of reports submitted to us by third parties (including regulatory agencies, law enforcement agencies and security consultants) , to the extent that such unauthorized access to our information technology systems is reasonably likely to have a material impact to the financial statements, in each case or in the aggregate, and (2) ransomware attacks when we paid or are contemplating paying a ransom, regardless of the amount.

D. Liabilities and Contingencies

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to you and are appropriately reflected in the financial statements.
2. We have informed you of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.
3. We have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related to litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in Note 1 to the financial statements all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

E. Going Concern

1. Note 1 to the financial statements discloses all the matters of which we are aware that are relevant to the IJB's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, our plans for future action, and the feasibility of those plans.

F. Subsequent Events

1. There have been no events, including events related to the COVID-19 pandemic, subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

G. Other information

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information. The other information comprises the information other than the financial statements, the audited part of the Remuneration Report, and the auditor's report thereon.
2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Lavers
(Chief Finance Officer)

Margaret Kerr
(Chairperson of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee)