Item 2

26th June 2024

WEST OF SCOTLAND ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

WEST OF SCOTLAND ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 March 2023

Contents **Page**

- Management Commentary 2
- Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts 5
- Movement in Reserves Statement 7
- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement 8
- Balance Sheet 9
- Cash Flow Statement 9
- Notes to the Accounts 10
- Annual Governance Statement 18
- Independent Auditor's Report 24

❖ Management Commentary

- The West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) was set up in 1997 as a Joint Committee of 12 Local Authorities in the region. However, North Lanarkshire Council left the Joint Committee on 31 March 2009, as did Inverclyde Council on 31 March 2013, in both cases after service of the requisite two-year notice period. East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire Councils, having previously submitted two years' notice of withdrawal from the service which would have come into effect on 1st April 2018, rescinded their notice following progress on revisions to the service delivery model, and remain members.

- In 2004 West Lothian Council became members of the Joint Committee, and since 2018 archaeological advice has also been provided to East Dunbartonshire Council, which became part of the Joint Committee in 2019.

- The primary purpose of the Archaeology Service is to provide planning related archaeological advice to its member councils to allow them to discharge their duties in respect of Scottish Government planning guidance for the treatment of archaeological remains in the planning process.

- Since 2003, a curatorial archaeological advice service has also been provided to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority, originally in conjunction with Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust and with the Stirling Council archaeologist. Since 1 July 2012 WoSAS has been the sole service provider.

- At various stages the Service has also provided advice to the Forestry Commission and its successor authorities, and to the Scottish Rural Development Programme. The Service has carried out specific archaeological advice contract work for a number of other public sector clients including Transport Scotland. It also previously received grant aid from the former Historic Scotland for specific projects.

- The Service covers a large, geographically diverse region stretching from the Southern Uplands to Argyll and its islands. This varied territory includes the Clydeside conurbation and the City of Glasgow with its strong industrial archaeological heritage, many important towns with medieval cores, and a large rural area containing many significant archaeological sites. The service plays a key role in identifying for its member councils and other client's archaeological issues arising from development within this diverse area. For this purpose, the service curates a detailed Historic Environment Record which contains the most up to date archaeological knowledge.

- The Historic Environment Record (HER) is the key tool for the Service in its own work. Selected data from the Record is made available online to the public through both a Geographical Information System (GIS) based interface and a searchable database. Spatial information from the Historic Environment Record is provided to the Local Government Improvement Service on behalf of each member council so that they continue to comply with the statutory requirements of the INSPIRE (Scotland) Regulations 2009. The service also responds to direct enquiries from the public.

- Not all archaeological sites are currently known – some areas of Scotland have still to be systematically surveyed. Many sites remain to be discovered below ground level, for example in the rich agricultural lands in Ayrshire where all surface traces have been ploughed flat over the centuries. Since its inception, the Service has identified and handled over 23,000 planning applications and as a result a number of significant archaeological sites have been discovered and have been excavated with developer funding, as advised in the Scottish Government policy.

- All archaeological fieldwork arising from the planning process is undertaken by private sector commercial archaeologists on behalf of developers. The service undertakes no fieldwork itself but oversees the implementation of archaeological conditions attached to planning consent for development. The service has continually refined and updated how it deals with the historic environment in the planning system, receiving Commendations for the Development Management category in the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning on two occasions, most recently in 2014.

- During the report period, the service dealt with 1,935 new casework items, a 7.2% increase on the total of the previous reporting year (2021/22 – 1,805). The new casework items comprised consultation on 973 planning applications, monitoring 621 Weekly Lists of Planning Applications, and 341 other casework items. In 2002, the Officer Steering Group put in place a suite of performance indicators which are used to inform decision making and enhance internal reporting processes. Achievements against the agreed Performance Indicators for each of these categories of work for the reporting period to 31st March 2023 are set out below.

Casework type	**Performance Indicator (As set out in WoSAS Service Level Agreement)**	**Performance Standard**	**Performance 2022-23**
Planning Application Consultations	Applications to be actioned within 21 calendar days of receipt.	80%	90.6%
Monitoring Weekly Lists	Lists to be monitored and actioned within 14 calendar days of receipt.	90%	99.8%
Other Work Areas	Casework to be actioned within 21 calendar days of receipt.	80%	90.1%

- During and after the Covid pandemic there were noticeably fewer requests for assistance or consultation responses in the five categories of casework aggregated into “Other Work Areas”. However, demand for this type of assistance is continuing to rise and is approaching the level seen before the pandemic. Due to the rising casework load in planning applications, the Service’s capacity to respond quickly to external requests for assistance in other work areas has been somewhat reduced, and there has been a slight fall in the percentage of casework response times achieved within the agreed performance standard compared to the last reporting period.

- Alterations to the host authority’s timetable for the implementation of its new staff salary structure continues to delay the post-Covid review of the Service’s updated service delivery proposals, but the Service will respond flexibly to take account of the outcome of the new salary structure, and of the continuing phased introduction of the provisions of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). In all of this, the Service will have to adapt and accommodate any changes in the way in which our work is carried out in response to the requirements of the member Councils.

- In the coming period, throughout any transition in working practices in the planning system, the service will continue to monitor, identify, and handle archaeological issues arising through the planning process on behalf of its member Councils and clients and will continue to give advice to the public and to make Historic Environment Record information available to them through the Service website at www.wosas.net, and through the Improvement Service's Spatial Hub and on the Pastmap portal in partnership with Historic Environment Scotland.

Financial Results

In 2016, the Joint Committee implemented a Reserves Policy in line with recommendations from Audit Scotland. It was agreed that the adopted policy should be subject to an annual review. The purpose of the policy and the associated reviews is to build and maintain a sufficient and prudent level of financial reserves. Reviews are undertaken annually by the Service Manager, in conjunction with a Principal Finance Officer from Glasgow City Council, and are based on several factors, including projections of future income/expenditure, an analysis of key risks (including financial risks), the level of financial liabilities and the economic outlook. The most recent review, presented to the joint committee in March 2023, recommended a reserve level of £96,000.

The balance of usable reserves at the 1 April 2022 was £163,428. In 2022/23 total expenditure was £182,113 (2021/22 - £159,256) and total income was £175,910 (2021/22 - £172,156) resulting in a deficit for the year of £6,203 (2021/22 – surplus of £12,963) compared to a £16,187 budgeted deficit. The balance of usable reserves at 31 March 2023 was £157,225. This represents 164% of the £96,000 reserve level recommended by the reserve policy review. The difference between the 2022/23 budgeted deficit and the actual 2022/23 year end deficit can be explained by a temporary arrangement reducing the number of hours worked by one of the employees.

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

1. The lead authority's responsibilities

The lead authority is required to:

- Make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that the proper officer of the council has responsibility for the administration of those affairs (section 95 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973). In this council, that officer is the Executive Director of Finance.

- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

- Ensure the Annual Accounts are prepared in accordance with legislation (the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and so far as is compatible with that legislation, in accordance with proper accounting practices (section 12 of the Local Government Scotland Act 2003); and

- Approve the Annual Accounts for signature.

These Annual Accounts will be considered by the Service before 31 August 2023 and submitted to the Service to be approved for signature no later than 26 June 2024.

2. The Executive Director of Finance responsibilities

The Executive Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the council's Annual Accounts, in accordance with proper practices, as required by legislation and as set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code).

In preparing the Annual Accounts, the Executive Director of Finance has:

- Selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently,
- Made judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis,
- Complied with legislation; and
- Complied with the Code (in so far as it is compatible with legislation).

The Executive Director of Finance has also:

- Kept adequate accounting records, which were up to date; and
- Taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

I certify that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of West of Scotland Archaeology Service as at 31 March 2023 and the transactions for the year then ended.

.

Martin Booth BA FCPFA MBA
Executive Director of Finance
xx June 2024

Movement in Reserves Statement for the Year ended 31 March 2023

The Code requires reserves to be summarised as usable and unusable. The balance in WOSAS is the sole useable reserve and represents the accumulated surplus of the organisation.

The balance on the fund stands at £157,225 as at 31 March 2023, a decrease of £6,203 from last year, due to the deficit on the provision of services in the year.

	Total Reserves £
Balance at 1 April 2021	**150,465**
Movement in reserves during 2021/22:	
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services	12,963
Other Comprehensive Income and (Expenditure)	0
Increase or (Decrease) in the year	**12,963**
Balance at 31 March 2022	**163,428**
Movement in reserves during 2022/23:	
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services	(6,203)
Other Comprehensive Income and (Expenditure)	0
Increase or (Decrease) in the year	**(6,203)**
Balance at 31 March 2023	**157,225**

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the Year ended 31 March 2023

2021/22 Net Exp. £		Note	2022/23 Net Expenditure £
159,256	Gross expenditure	3	182,113
(172,156)	Gross income	3	(173,757)
(12,900)	**Cost of Services**		**8,356**
(63)	Interest and investment income	7	(2,153)
(63)	**Financing and Investment (Income) and Expenditure**		**(2,153)**
(12,963)	**(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services**		**6,203**
0	**Other Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure**		**0**
(12,963)	**Total Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure**		**6,203**

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – shows income and expenditure incurred in the year relating to the provision of WOSAS and other unrealised gains and losses. In total, this reflects the movement in the overall WOSAS reserves shown in the Balance Sheet.

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

31 March 22 £		Note	31 March 23 £
173,001	Net short-term debtors	8	159,815
173,001	**Current Assets**		**159,815**
(9,573)	Short-term creditors	9	(2,590)
(9,573)	**Current Liabilities**		**(2,590)**
163,428	**Net Assets / (Liabilities)**		**157,225**
163,428	Usable Reserves		157,225
0	Unusable Reserves		0
163,428	**Total Reserves**		**157,225**

Balance Sheet – represents the value of the assets and liabilities of WOSAS as at 31 March 2023. The net assets (assets less liabilities) are matched by the total Usable and Unusable Reserves.

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended 31 March 2023

31 March 22 £	Revenue Activities	31 March 23 £
(12,963)	(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	6,203
	Adjustments for non-cash items:	
6,483	Increase/(decrease) in debtors	(13,186)
6,480	(Increase)/decrease in creditors	6,983
0	**Net cash (inflow)/outflow from activities**	**0**
0	**Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period**	**0**
0	**Cash and cash equivalents and the end of the reporting period**	**0**

Cash Flow Statement – details the changes in cash and cash equivalents of WOSAS.

`

Notes to the Financial Statements

The main objective of these notes is to provide further explanation for certain aspects of the core Financial Statements.

1. Statement of accounting policies

The Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 have been compiled on the basis of recommendations made by the Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee (LASAAC) and have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (the Code). The Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) with interpretation appropriate to the public sector. The statements are designed to give a 'true and fair view' of the financial performance and position of the Service.

The accounting concepts of materiality, accruals, going concern and primacy of legislative requirements have been considered in the application of accounting policies. In this regard the materiality concept means that information is included where the information is of such significance as to justify its inclusion. The accruals concept requires the non-cash effects of transactions to be included in the financial statement for the year in which they occur, not in the period in which the cash is paid or received. The going concern concept assumes that the Service will not significantly curtail the scale of its operation. Wherever accounting principles and legislative requirements are in conflict, the latter shall apply.

Income and debtors

Income includes all sums due in respect of subscriptions from member authorities and other organisations, fees and charges, and interest earned on fund balances for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Income includes all sums owed to the council for the year of account, regardless of when cash payments are received. Specifically:

- Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Joint Committee transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser, provided it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Joint Committee.

- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Council can reliably measure the percentage of completion of the transaction, and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Joint Committee.

- When revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor for the relevant amount will be recorded in the Balance Sheet.

- When it is probable that debts will remain unsettled, an impairment loss is recognised for bad and doubtful debtors within the Cost of Services.

The short-term debtors figure for 2022/23 included debtors impairments of £nil (2021/22 - £400).

Short-term debtors have been recognised in the accounts at the transaction price as it has been determined that they do not contain a significant financing component as defined by IFRS 9 – Financial Instruments.

Supplies of goods and services

Suppliers' invoices received up to 31 March 2023 are included, together with the specific accrual of invoices received after that date for material amounts, provided the goods or services were received in 2022/23.

Short-term creditors have been recognised in the accounts at the transaction price as it has been determined that they do not contain a significant financing component as defined by IFRS 9 – Financial Instruments.

Salaries

Salaries earned to 31 March 2023 are included in the accounts for 2022/23 irrespective of when the actual payments were made.

Material items

When items of income and expenditure are material, their nature and amount is disclosed separately, either on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement or in the notes to the accounts, depending on how significant the items are to the understanding of the service's financial performance.

Events after the balance sheet date

Events after the balance sheet date are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the statement of accounts is authorised for issue. Two types of events may be identified:

Those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period – the Financial Statements are adjusted to reflect such events; and

Those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Financial Statements are not adjusted to reflect such events, but where this would have a material effect, the nature and estimated financial impact of such events is disclosed in the notes.

Prior period adjustments, changes in accounting policies and estimates

Prior period adjustments may arise as a result of a change in accounting policy or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting policy are only made when required by proper accounting

practice or to provide more reliable or relevant information on the council's financial position. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period, as if the new policy had always been applied. Changes in accounting estimation techniques are applied in the current and future years and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment.

2. New standards issued but not yet adopted

The Code requires the disclosure of information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted. This applies to the adoption of the following new or amended standards within the 2023/24 Code:

- Amendments to IAS8 Definition of Accounting Estimates.
- Amendments to IAS1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2 Disclosure of Accounting Policies.
- Amendments to IAS12 Deferred Tax related to Assets and Liabilities arising from Single Transaction.
- Amendments to IFRS3 Conceptual Framework updates.

The Code requires implementation from 1 April 2023 therefore there is no impact on the 2022/23 annual accounts.

Overall, these new or amended standards are not expected to have a significant impact on the Annual Accounts.

3. Income and expenditure statement

The table below provides a detailed breakdown of income and expenditure of the Service during 2022/23.

2021/22 Net Exp. £		Note	2022/23 Net Expenditure £
	Income		
(138,090)	Contributions from participating local authorities	**4**	(138,090)
(34,066)	Fees and charges	**6**	(35,667)
(63)	Interest on balances	**7**	(2,153)
(172,219)	**Total income**		**(175,910)**
	Expenditure		
147,370	Employee costs	**5**	169,153
0	Fees and subscriptions		200
3,000	IT maintenance	**13**	3,000
66	Purchase of services		0
6,700	Rents	**11**	7,370
2,120	Audit fee	**12**	2,390
159,256	**Total expenditure**		**182,113**
(12,963)	(Surplus) or deficit for year		6,203
(150,465)	(Surplus) brought forward		(163,428)
(163,428)	**Accumulated (surplus) or deficit**		**(157,225)**

4. Local authority subscriptions

The majority of income received by WOSAS is derived from contributions received from the local authorities who are members of the Service.

A detailed breakdown of each member's contribution to the Service is shown in the table below:

Annual Subscription 2021/22 £	Local Authority	Annual Subscription 2022/23 £
(22,971)	Argyll and Bute Council	(22,971)
(8,647)	Glasgow City Council	(8,647)
(12,691)	East Ayrshire Council	(12,691)
(7,619)	East Renfrewshire Council	(7,619)
(12,691)	North Ayrshire Council	(12,691)
(12,691)	Renfrewshire Council	(12,691)
(12,691)	South Ayrshire Council	(12,691)
(17,784)	South Lanarkshire Council	(17,784)
(7,619)	West Dunbartonshire Council	(7,619)
(12,691)	West Lothian Council	(12,691)
(9,995)	East Dunbartonshire Council	(9,995)
(138,090)	**Total**	**(138,090)**

Note: - The contribution received from Glasgow City Council is net of an agreed lead authority administrative charge of £5,000.

5. Employee benefits

The staff members of the Service are Glasgow City Council employees and the council is an admitted body of the Strathclyde Pension Fund.

In accordance with International Accounting Standard 19 (IAS 19) – Employee Benefits, the council is required to disclose certain information concerning assets, liabilities, income and expenditure, of the pension scheme. The Service's staff pension costs are reflected in the figures disclosed in Glasgow City Council's financial statements.

The Code requires that employee benefits are recognised in the accounts when they are earned rather than when they are paid. As a result, there is a requirement to consider notional entitlements to annual leave earned but not taken as at 31 March. The employees working on the Service's activities are contracted to Glasgow City Council and therefore any notional liability has been included within the accounts of Glasgow City Council who holds the contract of employment.

6. Fees and Charges

The £35,667 total for fees and charges includes £16,667 for an archaeological advice service provided to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority.

7. Interest

The Interest rate applied is 1.35% and is calculated on an annual basis at 31 March using an average of the Base Rate interest over the year, the rate Glasgow City Council have paid to borrow monies throughout the year and the rate Glasgow City Council have received when lending throughout the year.

8. Short-term debtors

The net short-term debtors figure for 2022/23 of £159,815 (2021/22 £173,001) comprises the following:

31 March 2022 £	Short-term debtors	31 March 2023 £
16,295	Balance held by Glasgow City Council on behalf of WOSAS	37,030
	Outstanding payments from: -	
3,596	Pay accrual	3,536
22,971	Argyll and Bute Council	0
17,784	South Lanarkshire Council	0
12,691	East Ayrshire Council	12,691
12,691	North Ayrshire Council	0
12,691	South Ayrshire Council	25,382
12,691	Renfrewshire Council	12,691
12,691	West Lothian Council	12,691
9,995	East Dunbartonshire Council	9,995
0	Glasgow City Council contribution	8,294
7,619	West Dunbartonshire Council	7,619
7,619	East Renfrewshire Council	7,619
16,667	Loch Lomond and the Trossachs	16,667
7,000	Other outstanding payments	5,600
173,001	**Total sundry debtors**	**159,815**

9. Short-term creditors

The short-term creditors figure for 2022/23 of £2,590 (2021/22 £9,573) comprises the following: -

31 March 2022 £	Short-term creditors	31 March 2023 £
2,120	Accrued audit fees	2,390
6,700	Rent	0
400	Provision for bad debt	0
353	Glasgow City Council contribution	0
0	Subscription	200
9,573	**Total sundry creditors**	**2,590**

10. Remuneration Report

The prior year accounts have been restated to take account of updates required for the Remuneration disclosure to reflect key management personnel remuneration and the number of employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration during the year.

WOSAS does not directly employee any members of staff or key management personnel, with all services being provided by staff of the Member Authorities. A remuneration disclosure in respect of elected members and chief officers of the Council's, including those with authority and responsibility for WOSAS, are included in the Annual Accounts of each of the Member Authorities.

The number of other employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year are also included in similar Glasgow City Council disclosures as follows:

2021-22 Number of Employees (restated)	Senior Employee/Full Time Equivalent	2022-23 Number of Employees
0	£50,000 - £54,999	1
1	£55,000 - £59,999	0
1	**Total employees**	**1**

11. Related Parties

Related parties are organisations that the joint committee can control or who can control or influence the joint committee. WOSAS is a joint committee comprised of eleven member authorities, with Glasgow City Council holding the role of lead authority.

Related party transactions during the year and balances at 31 March 2023 are shown in the table below:

2021/22 Net Exp/(Inc) (Restated) £	*Debtor/(Creditor) at 31 March 2022 (Restated) £*	Related Party transactions and balances	2022/23 Exp £	2022/23 Inc £	Debtor/(Creditor) at 31 March 2023 £
		Related bodies			
(22,971)	22,971	Argyll & Bute Council	0	(22,971)	0
1,053	28,589	Glasgow City Council	10,370	(8,647)	45,324
(12,691)	12,691	East Ayrshire Council	0	(12,691)	12,691
(9,995)	9,995	East Dunbartonshire Council	0	(9,995)	9,995
(7,619)	7,619	East Renfrewshire Council	0	(7,619)	7,619
(12,691)	12,691	North Ayrshire Council	0	(12,691)	0
(12,691)	12,691	Renfrewshire Council	0	(12,691)	12,691
(12,691)	12,691	South Ayrshire Council	0	(12,691)	25,382
(17,784)	17,784	South Lanarkshire Council	0	(17,784)	0
(7,619)	7,619	West Dunbartonshire	0	(7,619)	7,619
(12,691)	12,691	West Lothian Council	0	(12,691)	12,691
(128,390)	**158,032**	**Totals**	**10,370**	**(138,090)**	**134,012**

12. Auditor remuneration

WOSAS incurred fees of £2,390 for the statutory inspection of the financial statements by Audit Scotland. The comparable figure for 2021/22 was £2,120. Fees payable in respect of other services provided by the appointed auditor were £nil (2021/22 £nil).

13. IT Maintenance

IT provision is through a service level agreement between the Service and Glasgow City Council valued at £3,000 for 2022/23 (2021/22 £3,000).

14. Events after the balance sheet date

There were no material events between 31 March 2023 and the date of signing that require to be reflected in the Financial Statements.

Annual Governance Statement

1. Scope of responsibility

The West of Scotland Archaeology Service Joint Committee is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. Under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Joint Committee also has a statutory duty to make arrangements to secure best value, which is to ensure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, and to ensure public funds and assets are used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging these responsibilities, elected members and senior officers must ensure proper arrangements for the governance of the Service's affairs and facilitate the effective exercise of its functions, which includes the management of risk and stewardship of the resources at its disposal.

WOSAS's financial management arrangements complies with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit and the role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016) by virtue of the adoption by Glasgow City Council of a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Framework: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.

The Code is regularly reviewed and evidences the Council's commitment to achieving good governance and demonstrates how it complies with recommended standards.

The Joint Committee relies on the Council which has embedded a system of risk management and internal control. While providing reasonable assurance, these systems cannot, however, provide absolute assurance or certainty in entirely eliminating the risk of the Council failing to achieve its aims and objectives; incurring material errors; losses; fraud or breaches of laws and regulations.

2. The Joint Committee's Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Joint Committee is directed and controlled. Through the framework it is accountable to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Joint Committee to monitor the achievement of its objectives against its plans and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services. The governance framework will be continually updated to reflect best practice, new legislative requirements and the expectations of stakeholders.

The Joint Committee has responsibility for ensuring the continuing effectiveness of its governance framework and system of internal control. The main features of the Joint Committee's governance arrangements are as follows:

- A Minute of Agreement between the member councils of WOSAS
- The Joint Committee of councillors from the member authorities is supported by a Steering Group of officers from the authorities' planning services.
- Clearly defined Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations
- Public performance reporting through the Annual Report
- Regular meetings of the WOSAS Officer Steering Group and the Joint Committee
- A budget setting process which includes the agreed local authority and other bodies contributions to the annual running costs of the organisation
- The regulation of employee matters through the Council's Code of Conduct for employees

3. Review of Effectiveness

The Council's governance arrangements, across 2022/23 and were regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework. The governance framework is continually reviewed to reflect best practice, new legislative requirements and the expectations of stakeholders. The effectiveness of the framework, including the system of internal control, is considered at least annually and is informed by:

(a) The work of the members of the Corporate Management Team, including statutory officers, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment. Throughout 2022/23, arrangements continued to operate to ensure that officers were clear on their role and responsibilities and that officers were compliant with the CIPFA Statements on "The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government" and "The Role of the Head of Internal Audit in Public Service Organisations 2019".

(b) Oversight by the Director of Legal and Administrative Services, who was the Council's Monitoring Officer for 2022/23.

(c) The Head of Audit and Inspection's annual report and the work of the Internal Audit section. The latest external quality review of the section was completed in April 2021 and reported to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 5 May 2021. This report concluded that the section conforms with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards 2017 (PSIAS). The Internal Audit section continues to hold BSi quality accreditation under ISO9001:2015 and Audit Scotland continue to use the work of the section in the execution of their annual audit plan. Internal Audit continue to present a register of all outstanding audit recommendations to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis. The Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23 was approved by the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 23 March 2022 with a subsequent update on 22 March 2023

(d) Observations made by external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

(e) The completion of a self-assessment questionnaire by Service Directors and Managing Directors/Chief Executives of subsidiaries and relevant associates. This questionnaire is aligned to the principles contained in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government, and requires assessments to be made of the extent to which arrangements within each Service/organisation comply with these principles. The responses to the questionnaires are confirmed on a sample basis by Internal Audit, as part of a rolling programme of corporate governance reviews.

(f) The completion of signed statements of internal control by all Service Directors and the Managing Directors/Chief Executives of subsidiaries and relevant associates. Such statements were received for 2022/23, declaring that "There are, in my opinion, no significant matters that require to be raised in this Certificate, which is provided to support Glasgow City Council's Statement of Internal Control for the financial year 2022/23, as it is my opinion that the procedures which have been designed to ensure proper governance and financial control are operating adequately".

(g) The exercising, by the two Scrutiny Committees of respective remits including scrutiny of the performance of Services, subsidiaries and relevant associates, including financial management, statutory and other performance, and outcomes set through the GCPP Community Plan, which are relevant to partnership working and monitoring internal financial control, corporate risk management and corporate governance, and receiving and considering summaries of internal and external audit reports. In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, all Committees are required to undertake an annual evaluation of effectiveness. An independent assessment of each Council Committee was undertaken during 2021/22, having been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These reviews were completed by senior officers independent of the Committee to be reviewed and the results were consolidated and reported to the Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2022. Self-assessments will be undertaken during 2023, allowing for a year of working after the 2022 Local Government Elections.

(h) The CIPFA Financial Management Code provides guidance for good and sustainable financial management in local authorities. By complying with the principles and standards within the code authorities will be able to demonstrate their financial sustainability. Council management undertook a self-assessment against the Financial Management Code during quarter one 2022/23, which confirmed overall compliance with the Code's requirements.

Senior officers have been advised on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by Internal and External Audit and plans to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the systems are in place.

4. Governance Developments and Future Activity

Following publication of a Best Value Assurance Report on the Council by Audit Scotland, on behalf of the Accounts Commission, the Council approved its BVAR Action Plan in September 2018. Updates on the BVAR Action Plan were presented to Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 13 March 2019 and 11 September 2019. The final update was presented on 11 March 2020 and noted that the majority of the specific agreed actions were complete with those actions forming part of longer-term ongoing plans, for example, homelessness and Thriving Places, continuing to progress, with oversight by, and reports to, existing governance structures, including the Corporate Management Team and City Administration Committee.

The following activity is planned, in relation to the governance framework, in 2023/24:

- Review the Strategic Plan to reflect the increasingly significant financial challenges faced by the Council and its ALEOs, and also the cost-of-living crisis that our citizens and communities continue to face.
- Review of the Council's Performance Management Framework.
- Continued implementation of the recommendations arising from the Best Value Assurance Report.
- Continuation of the Council Family Review, including the Glasgow Life CFR action plan, and enhancing the Council's ALEO Governance framework.
- Progressing implementation of a new pay and grading scheme.

5. Update on significant governance issues previously reported

ICT Service and Security

In 2021/22, the Internal Audit annual opinion was qualified due to significant concerns relating to ICT security and ICT contract management arrangements. Whilst some progress has been made to remedy these issues, the Council remains exposed to significant risk in this area. Internal Audit remains heavily involved in monitoring the progress being made by the Council's ICT provider, CGI, and Council Management on the high priority actions that are required to mitigate the significant risks arising in this area to an appropriate level.

6. Significant Governance Issues

SAP P1 Incident

In January 2023, the Council experienced a critical incident involving the SAP system, leaving this business critical Enterprise Resource Planning system unavailable for five weeks. SAP is used to manage essential business processes including payroll, accounts payable/receivable, and financial ledger (including management accounts). It also interfaces with other key systems, for example Social Work Services' Care First system, and Financial Service's Academy system (Council Tax and Housing Benefit).

A full lessons-learned report by CGI was issued in May 2023 and Internal Audit is undertaking corroboration assurance work on the findings. Internal Audit is also currently working through the significant manual and business continuity activity that happened during the incident, and the clearing of backlog transactions. The processes adopted and the risk-based approach observed to date appear reasonable. However, substantive testing by Internal Audit on transactions affected by the outage is ongoing due to the scale of the data. A further update will be provided to FASC once this significant assurance work by Internal Audit is complete.

Prior Year Audit Recommendations:

In previous years, WoSAS received several external audit recommendations highlighting the requirement to update the key strategic documents which underpin the governance of the Joint Committee.

Such documents include the Minute of Agreement, Business Plan, Service Level Agreements, and the ICT Service Level Agreement. It was also highlighted that some of the information on the WoSAS website had not been updated in several years.

At 31st March 2023, WoSAS had made limited progress in the implementation of these recommendations. One factor that has impacted progress is the ongoing review of the Council's pay and grading system, which is likely to have a significant impact on the overall cost of service delivery by WoSAS. Work is ongoing to ensure that revised strategic documents can be developed as soon as the revised pay scales have been formally implemented by the Council.

7. Internal Audit Opinion

The Council has a system of internal control designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. Internal controls cannot eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

Based on the audit work undertaken, the assurances provided by Service Directors and Managing Directors/Chief Executives of subsidiaries and relevant associates, and noting the issues outlined at Section 3 above, it is the Head of Audit and Inspection's opinion that limited assurance can be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance and control environment which operated during 2022/23 in the council and its subsidiaries and relevant associates

8. Certification

It is our opinion that limited assurance can be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of governance and internal control that operate in Glasgow City Council and its subsidiaries and relevant associates. The self-assessments, the statements of internal control signed by Service Directors and Managing Directors (of subsidiaries and relevant associates) and the work undertaken by Internal Audit has shown that, with the exception of those matters listed above, the arrangements in place are operating as planned. However, improvements are specifically required in relation to ICT services and resilience, and governance arrangements at City Building. Work is underway to address these matters and officers will monitor and report on their implementation.

We will continue to review and enhance, as necessary, our governance arrangements.

Independent auditor's report to the members of West of Scotland Archaeology Service Joint Committee and the Accounts Commission

Reporting on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on financial statements

We certify that we have audited the financial statements in the annual accounts of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service for the year ended 31 March 2023 under Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The financial statements comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards, as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (the 2022/23 Code).

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Joint Committee as at 31 March 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards, as interpreted and adapted by the 2022/23 Code; and
- 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.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)), as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Accounts Commission for Scotland. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We were appointed by the Accounts Commission on 18/05/2022. Our period of appointment is five years, covering 2022/23 to 2026/27. We are independent of the Joint Committee in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. Non-audit services prohibited by the Ethical Standard were not provided to the Joint Committee. We believe that the audit evidence we have

obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern basis of accounting

We have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Joint Committee's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

These conclusions are not intended to, nor do they, provide assurance on the Joint Committee's current or future financial sustainability. However, we report on the Joint Committee's arrangements for financial sustainability in a separate Annual Audit Report available from the Audit Scotland website.

Risks of material misstatement

We report in our Annual Audit Report the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement that we identified and our judgements thereon.

Responsibilities of the Executive Director of Finance and the Joint Committee for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities, the Executive Director of Finance, Glasgow City Council, is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for such internal control as the Execution Director of Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Executive Director of Finance is responsible for assessing the Joint Committee's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless there is an intention to discontinue the Joint Committee's operations.

The Joint Committee is responsible for overseeing the financial reporting process.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an

auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities outlined above to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Procedures include:

- using our understanding of the local government sector to identify that the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 are significant in the context of the Joint Committee;

- inquiring of the Executive Director of Finance as to other laws or regulations that may be expected to have a fundamental effect on the operations of the Joint Committee;

- inquiring of the Executive Director of Finance concerning the Joint Committee's policies and procedures regarding compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework;

- discussions among our audit team on the susceptibility of the financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur; and

- considering whether the audit team collectively has the appropriate competence and capabilities to identify or recognise non-compliance with laws and regulations.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the Joint Committee's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

Irregularities that result from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error as fraud may involve collusion, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. The capability of the audit to detect fraud and other irregularities depends on factors such as the skilfulness of the perpetrator, the frequency and extent of manipulation, the degree of collusion involved, the relative size of individual amounts manipulated, and the seniority of those individuals involved.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Reporting on other requirements

Other information

The Executive Director of Finance is responsible for the other information in the annual accounts. The other information comprises the Management Commentary, Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to read all the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon except on the Management Commentary and Annual Governance Statement to the extent explicitly stated in the following opinions prescribed by the Accounts Commission.

Opinions prescribed by the Accounts Commission on the Management Commentary and Annual Governance Statement

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Management Commentary for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with statutory guidance issued under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003; and

- the information given in the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016).

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We are required by the Accounts Commission to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the audited part of the Remuneration Report are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

Conclusions on wider scope responsibilities

In addition to our responsibilities for the annual accounts, our conclusions on the wider scope responsibilities specified in the Code of Audit Practice, including those in respect of Best Value, are set out in our Annual Audit Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 108 of the Code of Audit Practice, we do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

Rob Jones, (for and on behalf of Ernst & Young),
Ernst & Young LLP
G1 Building
5 George Square
Glasgow
G2 1DY