Press release: Reporting matters of material significance: guidance for auditors and examiners

The revised list of matters of material significance is intended to assist auditors and independent examiners in meeting their reporting requirements to the charity regulators.

The new guidance adds 2 new areas for reporting:

1. If an auditor has concerns regarding a charity's accounts and issues a modified audit opinion report or qualified independent examiner's report.
2. Where an auditor has concerns that conflicts of interests or related party transactions have not been properly managed or declared.

The list has been published by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CCEW) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI).

In all 3 jurisdictions, auditors and examiners have a legal duty to report matters of material significance to the regulator. In order to assist them in this duty there was previously a list of matters which had been prepared jointly by OSCR and CCEW.

Recognising that a number of years had passed since the original list was developed and also that the regulator in Northern Ireland was now also in operation, a decision was taken to refresh the list, considering carefully the regulatory experience to date.

A revised list of matters was prepared and consulted on from May to September 2016. Consultation feedback was fully considered and a final list has now been developed. The new list of 9 matters of material significance includes 2 new matters (matters 8 and 9) that need to be reported and removes one requirement to report (see 'Notes to editors').

The updated list can be viewed on GOV.UK.

Nigel Davies, Head of Accountancy Services at the Charity Commission of England and Wales, said:

> Auditors and examiners play a vital role in supporting us to carry out our regulatory functions. We have, as regulators, reflected on our experiences to date and it is clear that not all auditors and examiners have been reporting matters to us. We hope that by providing an updated list auditors and examiners may be clearer in their duties. We urge auditors and examiners to read this updated list of matters which has been informed by our regulatory work to

report and continue to report these serious issues to the regulators.

Laura Anderson, Head of Professional Advice and Intelligence at the OSCR said:

> The revised list of matters has been drawn from our experience as regulators. We have been greatly encouraged by the level of feedback we have received through our consultation, which has allowed us to refine the list, ensuring it meets both the needs of the regulators as well as examiners and auditors.

Myles McKeown, Head of Compliance and Enquiries at CCNI said:

> As a relatively new regulator the list of matters of material significance will be of great assistance to auditors and examiners in our jurisdiction. We have welcomed the opportunity to work together with colleagues in CCEW and OSCR in developing and publishing the final list.

Ends

PR 32/17

Notes to editors

1. Matter 8 from the previous list of matters to be reported has been removed. This is due to the fact that this led to auditors and independent examiners advising the regulator where they had simply ceased to hold office. Where ceasing to hold office occurs due to a reportable matter this is covered by an alternative matter.
2. Matter 8: "Any notification or matter reported to the trustees on resigning as independent examiner or matter that the examiner is aware of on resignation or ceasing to act that falls within the categories of the previously set out reportable matters, or for examiners the notification on ceasing to hold office or resigning from office, of those matters reported to trustees".
3. Under legislation in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, auditors and independent examiners have a duty to report certain matters to their respective charity regulators. Although the legislation varies in each jurisdiction the broad requirement is that where an auditor or independent examiner becomes aware of any matter, through the course of their work, which they believe is of material significance for the regulator in the exercise of their function.
4. The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) is the independent regulator and registrar of Scotland's 23,500 charities and publishes the

Scottish Charity Register at www.oscr.org.uk. Our vision is for charities in which the public has confidence and which provide public benefit.
5. The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is the independent regulator of charities in Northern Ireland, established under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, responsible for ensuring Northern Ireland has a dynamic and well governed charities sector in which the public can have confidence.
6. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our annual report.

Press release: Employment remains at record high rate of 74.6%

Official figures released today (12 April 2017) show that the employment rate is at 74.6%, with 31.84 million people in work – an increase of 312,000 on the year and the joint highest rate since records began in 1971.

The Office for National Statistics has also announced that the unemployment rate remains low at 4.7%. It has not been lower since 1975.

Full-time work continues to be the driving force behind the rise in employment. Average weekly wages grew by 2.3% including bonuses over the last year. Wage growth has remained above 2% every month since the beginning of 2016.

Secretary of State Damian Green said:

> This is yet another strong set of figures, with unemployment at a rate that hasn't been beaten since the 1970s and more vacancies than ever before.
>
> More people are finding full-time jobs and average wages have grown yet again, meaning more families have the security of a regular wage.
>
> However, there is always more to do. That's why we're creating a welfare system that rewards work through Universal Credit, which helps claimants keep more of the money they earn.

Today's figures also show:

- there are 1.56 million unemployed people, 141,000 fewer than this time last year

- the number of people in full-time employment grew by 146,000 in the last 3 months
- the unemployment rate of 16 to 24 year olds who have left full-time education is 10.9% – a decrease of 1.3% from last year
- long-term unemployment is at 389,000 – the lowest since 2008

Separate figures out today show 1.1 million claims have been made to Universal Credit. Of the 490,000 people now claiming Universal Credit, nearly 40% are in work.

Estimates of the Claimant Count are no longer included in the ONS statistical bulletin as they may now be providing a misleading representation of the UK labour market. ONS released a statement explaining the decision about the claimant count on 23 February 2017.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0203 267 5118

Follow DWP on:

News story: New Lower Thames Crossings to cut congestion and create thousands of jobs

[unable to retrieve full-text content]Preferred route for a new Lower Thames Crossing and A13 widening announced.

Press release: More than 130 new free schools to create more good places

Thousands of new school places will be created across the country following the largest wave of free schools approvals this Parliament, giving more parents the choice of a good school place for their child.

Today (12 April 2017) the Department for Education has approved applications for 131 new schools, creating more than 69,000 places. These schools will be led by high-performing institutions, including a grammar-school-led multi-academy trust (MAT) and the largest state boarding school in the country, demonstrating how existing high-performing schools can help raise attainment more widely, as set out in the government’s education proposals.

Free schools are one of the highest performing groups of non-selective state schools, with 29% of those inspected rated outstanding by Ofsted. Since 2014, more than 80% of mainstream free schools have been approved in areas where there was a need for more school places, while others are opened in response to parental demand to create competition and drive up standards where existing provision is not adequate.

Today’s approvals build on the government’s strong record in creating more good school places. Already, there are 1.8 million more children in good or outstanding schools compared to 2010. The new approvals also demonstrate the government’s determination to tap into the expertise that already exists within the school system to ensure standards continue to rise.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

> We need schools that can bring out the best in every single child no matter where they’re growing up, how much their parents earn, or however different their talents are.
>
> That’s why these new schools are so important – they give us the school places we need for the future, and they also give parents more choices to find a great school place in their area that’s right for their child.

New free school proposals approved today include:

- Stone Lodge Academy – a new secondary school for 11- to 19-year-olds in Dartford, proposed by Endeavour Multi Academy Trust. The trust already runs 2 highly successful grammar schools and will use their expertise running selective schools to open a new non-selective free school
- Barton Court Academy Trust Free School – proposed by the Ofsted-outstanding Barton Court Grammar School, a new non-selective free school providing 1,050 school places for 11- to 19-year-olds in Canterbury
- The Flagship School – a parent-led special school to provide 56 places for 9- to 6-year-old pupils in Hastings, which was identified as an opportunity area earlier this year
- City Enterprise Academy – proposed by the successful City Learning Trust, the school will provide 100 much-needed alternative provision places in Stoke-on-Trent, which was identified as an opportunity area earlier this year
- Sapientia Primary Prep School – proposed by The Sapientia Education Trust, which runs Wymondham College – the largest state boarding school in England. The school for 5- to 11-year-olds will benefit from the expertise and facilities the trust has to offer, and provide 450 primary places in Norfolk
- School 21 Campus and School 21 Sugar House – 2 new schools for 5-to 16-year-olds in Newham, East London, creating over 2,400 places. The schools will be operated by the trust behind School 21, which has been rated outstanding by Ofsted
- Rushey Mead Free School – will provide 1,200 new secondary places in

Leicester. It will be opened by the trust behind the Rushey Mead Academy – rated outstanding by Ofsted and consistently one of the highest performing schools in Leicester

124 free schools have opened since 2015, with a further 376 set to open by 2020 – including the schools announced today – which means the government is on track to meet its manifesto commitment of opening 500 more new free schools by September 2020.

As part of its work to open more free schools the government has created a new body – LocatED. The organisation is made up of experienced property specialists to help speed up the process of acquiring sites for new schools and get the best value for the taxpayer.

Wave 12 free schools approved today:

1. 111 free schools in total creating 67,718 new school places:
    - 18 schools in the East of England, creating 8,875 places
    - 9 schools in the East Midlands, creating 8,105 places
    - 7 schools in Yorkshire and the Humber, creating 4,006 places
    - 2 schools in the North East, creating 204 places
    - 5 schools in the North West, creating 4,610 places
    - 27 schools in the South East, creating 15,429 places
    - 15 schools in the South West, creating 7,721 places
    - 12 schools in the West Midlands, creating 9,060 places
    - 16 schools in London, creating 9,708 places

2. In addition, 20 local authority areas have been approved to create a new special school through the free school process – taking the total number of approvals to 131. This will create 1,700 school places for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. These will be created in Bedford, Blackpool, Bradford, Bristol, Cheshire East, Croydon, Doncaster, Enfield, Essex, Hampshire, Havering, Herefordshire, Hounslow, Manchester, Portsmouth, Redbridge, Sheffield, South Gloucestershire, Suffolk and Sunderland.

3. Free schools can be set up by parents, teachers, charities, businesses, cultural and sporting bodies, community groups, academy trusts and sponsors, and existing schools in response to demand from the local community, either where there is a shortage of places, or where the parents are not happy with the places on offer.

4. 76% of open mainstream free schools up to September 2016 are located in areas where there was a need for more school places, and almost half are in the 30% most deprived communities in the country. They are also more likely to be rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted than other state schools – and can help to raise standards in neighbouring schools by introducing fresh ideas and competition.

5. LocatED will be accountable to the Secretary of State for Education, and will be responsible for the acquisition of sites for new schools. It launched in March 2017 and will play a vital role in supporting the department to meet this government's manifesto commitment to open 500 new schools by 2020, almost double the number of free schools opened over the course of the last Parliament.

Speech: David Gauke at the Construction Products Association Spring Lunch

And I'd like to start with a couple of stats.

Ipsos Mori surveyed over a thousand people in Britain last year about infrastructure – and I think everyone hear would agree with the opinions they discovered.

Because over three quarters of Brits saw investment in infrastructure as absolutely vital to our future economic growth.

Almost half were supportive of further borrowing to invest in our infrastructure – a conclusion we reached ourselves before we announced an extra £23 billion last year, tightly focused on economic infrastructure.

And one in two people surveyed, thought that the UK's record of delivering infrastructure projects in the past, hadn't exactly always covered us in glory.

So we're all pretty much on board with the same three premises, that:

1. Our success depends in part upon our infrastructure
2. We need to invest more in building it
3. We need to work smarter in delivering it

Of course, it's all very well agreeing with those things in theory.

But I think we've really started doing those things in practice too.

So before we move to your questions and comments, I want to talk about three ways in which we're doing that – by planning more, investing more, and delivering more.

So I'll start at the start, which is planning and deciding what infrastructure the country needs in the first place.

As ever, there will always be a range of conflicting views as to which project you invest in – the next airport runway being a high profile case in point!

But it's perhaps helpful if I outline the fundamental approach we always want to take – however big the decisions.

And that's considering what the return on any given infrastructure investment would be.

Because it's not about spending money, it's about investing money – to make us the UK more productive, and a better place to live.

So to get that right, we need a good, evidence-based analysis of the infrastructure improvements we need, and the lasting value of the various options that could deliver them.

That is, in essence, why we established the National Infrastructure Commission to do that research and come up with independent advice to government based on their findings.

They are already doing great work on that front – as I'm sure you'll agree if you've looked at any of their reports – from their consideration of 5G, to an Oxford-Cambridge corridor, not to mention their assessment of our infrastructure needs in the round – to which many of you in the room will have made your own contributions.

So the NIC is already taking us a big step forward in getting us planning the right investments for the future.

But alongside that, we've also set out our plans so businesses can see what is coming – and this time last year, we published the first ever National Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the UK. Many of you had been telling us for years that's what we needed, and it was absolutely right that we listened to that.

So I'm pleased we've made such progress on that front.

Now, we've got multi-year plans for things like road spending, and Network Rail.

And we are publishing our infrastructure and construction pipelines twice a year – which means you can see what's coming, and plan accordingly.

But I want to come onto investing, because it's not enough just to get your decisions right, and plan well.

You also have to find the cash to make them happen – and that's where everyone starts to look in the Treasury's direction!

But I think the point to make is that the Treasury is in full agreement about the need to invest in the infrastructure we need for our economy to grow – both now and in the medium to long-term.

So we've made sure the funding is there to do that.

And in fact the last pipeline for infrastructure we set out in December represented half a trillion pounds worth of infrastructure investment, from both the public and private sector.

And that's not just for the big projects everyone's heard of – like Hinkley Point C, Crossrail or HS2.

It's for projects across sectors and across the country – from flood defences, to superfast broadband.

And it's for innovative projects too – like putting 10% of that £23 billion productivity fund I referred to earlier into a new Housing Infrastructure Fund, to unlock thousands of homes by getting the underlying infrastructure established. Very much a case of build it, knowing that they will come!

But I don't just want to focus on our investment in the projects themselves, without mentioning also our investment in the people who will deliver them.

We've done a lot to help the next generation of people in construction get the skills they need.

Our strategy for increasing productivity in government construction will see us support 20,000 new apprentices as they learn the skills of the modern trade.

And as you may have heard, we're now taking forward a fundamental reform of the technical education our young people have open to them, which I think will make a real difference in the number of talented people we get coming through to work on all our big infrastructure plans.

But I also don't want to focus just on government's investment.

Because enabling private sector investment is just as critical.

We need companies investing in their staff.

And that includes helping to shape the training that is available – and let me pay tribute to the CPA's own role in this – because Diana [Montgomery – Chief Executive] has been doing great work in leading this industry's development of our National Infrastructure Plan for Skills.

On that note, I'd like to encourage everyone in the room who is paying the apprenticeship levy to get involved in making sure that the apprenticeships are really geared up to the skills you will be relying on as this industry evolves.

But it's also about private sector investment in the projects themselves.

Because you were asking us to do much more to encourage investors.

So that's what we did – establishing a guarantee scheme of up to £40 billion

– which is already behind some of the new things we're now seeing built.

And we've also made sure the UK is a top choice for international investors through both our stable and balanced regulatory environment, and our competitive tax regime.

In fact, Nabarro's 2015 Infrastructure Index judged the UK the number one country for attracting private sector investment.

So we've made our planning better, and we've got more investment coming into both British skills and British infrastructure projects.

But are we delivering more?

Certainly, there's a lot more things happening on the ground – we've got over 700 schemes in our programme just up to the end of the Parliament.

And without a doubt, we are starting to become a lot more sophisticated in managing these projects professionally.

Because just as I mentioned the National Infrastructure Commission earlier, I should at this point mention the other game-changer in UK infrastructure, which is the Infrastructure and Projects Authority – which we set up to get things built on time and on budget.

But when I talk about delivering more, I don't just mean more construction projects, run better. I mean delivering more value.

And that's why we've asked the IPA to assess how we can improve the cost, quality and performance of our new and existing infrastructure.

In the modern world, that so often means through innovation – technology and digitalisation are making huge waves in this, as in every, sector.

We've got robots checking our flood defences.

Drones scanning our construction sites.

Optic cables in our railway lines telling us where the stresses are.

Sensors telling us if our staff are fatigued.

And it's great that we're already seeing more innovative methods of construction – I don't think it's an exaggeration, for example, to say that our Building Information Modelling is revolutionising how we build things – as well as setting us apart as a global leader.

I know my colleagues in the Business department are really excited about taking this to the next level – BIM level 3 to be precise.

So it is a new world, and we want to see UK companies really leading the charge in innovative building and construction practices.

That's what we looked at closely in our Construction Strategy – and of course, for Construction 2025.

We’ve also put innovation in infrastructure at the heart of our industrial strategy green paper – which closes next week, so do take the chance to tell us your views.

So in short, we have come a very long way to move the story of British infrastructure and construction forward.

We want to put to bed that decades old perception that the UK doesn’t develop new infrastructure very well.

This is a new chapter.

We’ve got new institutions to improve how we do things.

Good regulation.

An attractive environment for investors.

A much higher level of funding.

And exceptional innovation taking place.

The reason we’ve got all those things is thanks to companies like yours.

We’ve been listening to you, and working with you, to help all of these things happen. And it’s important you keep telling us what’s helpful.

Because we are relying on you – not only to help us manage our exit from the EU in a way that works for this sector, but to keep building on all we’ve achieved so far.

That’s how we’ll keep the construction sector strong and successful.

Giving you the opportunity to be more innovative in delivery; to invest smarter in skills; and to drive up productivity.

And giving the British public, and their businesses, the infrastructure they need to live well and prosper.