

7 May 2025

The Mayor and Councillors
Ōtorohanga District Council
PO Box 11
ŌTOROHANGA

Dear Councillors,

AUDIT ENGAGEMENT LETTER

This audit engagement letter is sent to you on behalf of the Auditor-General who is the auditor of all “public entities”, including Ōtorohanga District Council, under section 14 of the Public Audit Act 2001 (the Act). The Auditor-General has appointed me, Bruno Dente, using the staff and resources of Deloitte Limited, under section 32 and 33 of the Act, to carry out the annual audits of the Ōtorohanga District Council’s financial statements and performance information. We will be carrying out these annual audits on the Auditor-General’s behalf, for the year ending 30 June 2025.

In the delivery of services we may engage other Deloitte Network Firms to assist with certain aspects of this engagement. We will at all times remain responsible for the work undertaken in the delivery of those services to you.

This letter outlines:

- the terms of the audit engagement and the nature, and limitations, of the annual audit; and
- the respective responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors (“Council”) and me, as the Appointed Auditor, for the financial statements and performance information.

The objectives of the annual audit are:

- to provide an independent opinion on the Council’s financial statements and performance information; and
- to report on other matters that come to our attention as part of the annual audit. Typically those matters will relate to issues of financial management and accountability.

We will carry out the audit in accordance with the Auditor-General’s Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Professional and Ethical Standards and the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (collectively the Auditing Standards). The Auditing Standards require that we comply with ethical requirements, and plan and perform the annual audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Council’s financial statements and performance information are free from material misstatement.

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The Auditing Standards also require that we remain alert to issues of concern to the Auditor-General. Such issues tend to relate to matters of financial management and accountability.

Your responsibilities

Our audit will be carried out on the basis that the Council acknowledges that it has responsibility for:

- preparing the financial statements and performance information in accordance with any applicable legal requirements and financial reporting standards;
- having such internal control as determined necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements and performance information that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- providing us with:
 - access to all information relevant to preparing the financial statements and performance information such as records, documentation, and other information;
 - all other information, in addition to the financial statements and performance information, to be included in the annual report;
 - additional information that we may request from the Ōtorohanga District Council for the purpose of the audit;
 - unrestricted access to Council members and employees that we consider necessary; and
 - written confirmation concerning representations made to us in connection with the audit.

The Council's responsibilities extend to all resources, activities, and entities under its control. We expect that the Council will ensure:

- the resources, activities, and entities under its control have been operating effectively and efficiently;
- it has complied with its statutory obligations including laws, regulations, and contractual requirements;
- it has carried out its decisions and actions with due regard to minimising waste;
- it has met Parliament's and the public's expectations of appropriate standards of behaviour in the public sector in that it has carried out its decisions and actions with due regard to probity; and
- its decisions and actions have been taken with due regard to financial prudence.

We expect the Council and/or the individuals within the Ōtorohanga District Council with delegated authority, to immediately inform us of any suspected fraud, where there is a reasonable basis that suspected fraud has occurred - regardless of the amount involved. Suspected fraud also includes instances of bribery and/or corruption.

The Council has certain responsibilities relating to the preparation of the financial statements and performance information and in respect of financial management and accountability matters. These specific responsibilities are set out in Annex 1. The Auditor-General and Deloitte Limited take seriously their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and we expect you to provide a safe and healthy working environment for our audit staff when they are working at your premises. Specific health and safety responsibilities are set out in Annex 1. We expect members of the Council to be familiar with all of the responsibilities set out in Annex 1 and, where necessary, have obtained advice about them.

The Council should have documented policies and procedures to support its responsibilities. It should also regularly monitor performance against its objectives.



Our responsibilities

Carrying out the audit

We are responsible for forming an independent opinion on whether the financial statements of Ōtorohanga District Council:

- present fairly, in all material respects:
 - its financial position as at 30 June 2025; and
 - its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended;
 - comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with Public Benefit Entity Reporting Standards; and
 - the funding impact statement, presents fairly, in all material aspects, the amount of funds produced from each source of funding and how the funds were applied as compared to the information included in the Council's Annual Plan.

We are also responsible for forming an independent opinion on whether the performance information of Ōtorohanga District Council:

- presents fairly, in all material respects, the performance for the year ended 30 June 2025, including:
 - the levels of service achieved compared with the intended levels of service and whether any intended changes to levels of service were achieved;
 - the reasons for any significant variation between the levels of service achieved and the intended levels of service;
 - complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand;
 - the statement about capital expenditure for each group of activities, presents fairly, in all material respects, actual capital expenditure as compared to the budgeted capital expenditure included in the Council's Annual Plan; and
 - the funding impact statement for each group of activities, presents fairly, in all material aspects, the amount of funds produced from each source of funding and how the funds were applied as compared to the information included in the Council's Long-term plan.

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements and performance information. How we obtain this information depends on our judgement, including our assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements and performance information, whether due to fraud or error. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies and the reasonableness of accounting estimates, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements and performance information.

We do not examine every transaction, nor do we guarantee complete accuracy of the financial statements and performance information. Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, together with the inherent limitations of internal control, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the Auditing Standards.



During the audit, we 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 Council's internal controls. However, we will communicate to you in writing about any significant deficiencies in internal control relevant to the audit of the financial statements and performance information that we identify during the audit.

During the audit, the audit team will:

- be alert for issues of effectiveness and efficiency – in particular, how the Council and the District Council have carried out their activities;
- consider laws and regulations relevant to the audit;
- be alert for issues of waste – in particular, whether the Council obtained and applied the resources of the District Council in an economical manner, and whether any resources are being wasted;
- be alert for issues of a lack of probity – in particular, whether the Council and the District Council have met Parliament's and the public's expectations of appropriate standards of behaviour in the public sector; and
- be alert for issues of a lack of financial prudence.

Our independence

It is essential that the audit team and Deloitte Limited remain both economically and attitudinally independent of Ōtorohanga District Council; including being independent of management personnel and members of the management personnel and members of the Council. This involves being, and appearing to be, free of any interest that might be regarded, whatever its actual effect, as being incompatible with the objectivity of the audit team and the Deloitte Limited.

To protect our independence, specific limitations are placed on us in accepting engagements with the Council other than the annual audit. We may accept certain types of other engagements, subject to the requirements of the Auditing Standards. Any other engagements must be the subject of a separate written arrangement between the Council and myself or Deloitte Limited.

Reporting

We will issue an independent audit report that will be attached to the financial statements and performance information. This report contains our opinion on the fair presentation of the financial statements and performance information and whether they comply with the applicable reporting requirements. The audit report may also include comment on other financial management and accountability matters that we consider may be of interest to the addressee of the audit report.

We will also issue a management letter that will be sent to the Council. This letter communicates any matters that come to our attention during the audit that, in our opinion, are relevant to the Council. Typically those matters will relate to issues of financial management and accountability. We may also provide other management letters to the Ōtorohanga District Council from time to time. We will inform the Council of any other management letters we have issued.

Please note that the Auditor-General may publicly report matters that are identified in the annual audit, in keeping with section 21 of the Public Audit Act 2001.

Audit tools

You agree that, for the purpose of providing the services covered by this letter, we may use third parties, wherever located, to store and process information received from you or your agents; provided that such third parties are bound by confidentiality obligations similar to those contained in the Terms. For example, Deloitte uses a cloud services platform (currently Microsoft Azure), to host an integrated suite of audit tools which may be used as part of our engagement with you.



Next steps

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and the terms of the audit engagement by signing the enclosed copy of the letter in the space provided and returning it to me. The terms will remain effective until a new Audit Engagement Letter is issued.

If you have any questions about the audit generally, or have any concerns about the quality of the audit, you should contact me as soon as possible. If after contacting me you still have concerns, you should contact the Director of Auditor Appointments at the Office of the Auditor-General on (04) 917 1500.

If you require any further information, or wish to discuss the terms of the audit engagement further before replying, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully/sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B Dente".

Bruno Dente
Appointed Auditor
On behalf of the Auditor-General



Client Acceptance

I acknowledge the terms of this engagement and that I have the required authority on behalf of the Council.

(Signature)

(Name)

(Position)

(Date Signed)

Annex 1 – Respective specific responsibilities of the Council and the Appointed Auditor

| Responsibilities for the financial statements and performance information | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You are required by legislation to prepare financial statements and performance information in accordance with legal requirements and financial reporting standards.</p> <p>You must also ensure that any accompanying information in the annual report is consistent with that reported in the audited financial statements and performance information.</p> <p>You are required by legislation to prepare the financial statements and performance and provide that information to us before the statutory reporting deadline. It is normal practice for you to set your own timetable to comply with statutory reporting deadlines. To meet the reporting deadlines, we are dependent on receiving the financial statements and performance information ready for audit and in enough time to enable the audit to be completed. "Ready for audit" means that the financial statements and performance information have been prepared in accordance with legal requirements and financial reporting standards, and are supported by proper accounting records and complete evidential documentation.</p> | <p>We are responsible for carrying out an annual audit, on behalf of the Auditor-General. We are responsible for forming an independent opinion on whether the financial statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present fairly, in all material respects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the financial position as at 30 June 2025; and - the financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended; - comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with Public Benefit Entity Reporting Standards; and - the funding impact statement, presents fairly, in all material aspects, the amount of funds produced from each source of funding and how the funds were applied as compared to the information included in the Council's Annual Plan. • comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with Public Benefit Entity Reporting Standards <p>We are also responsible for forming an independent opinion on whether the performance information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents fairly, in all material respects, the performance for the year ended 30 June 2025, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the levels of service achieved compared with the intended levels of service and whether any intended changes to levels of service were achieved; - the reasons for any significant variation between the levels of service achieved and the intended levels of service; - complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand; - the statement about capital expenditure for each group of activities, presents fairly, in all material respects, actual capital expenditure as compared to the budgeted capital expenditure included in the Council's Annual Plan; and |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the funding impact statement for each group of activities, presents fairly, in all material aspects, the amount of funds produced from each source of funding and how the funds were applied as compared to the information included in the Council's Long-term plan. <p>We will also read the other information accompanying the financial statements and performance information and consider whether there are material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and performance information.</p> <p>Materiality is one of the main factors affecting our judgement on the areas to be tested and on the timing, nature, and extent of the tests and procedures performed during the audit. In planning and performing the annual audit, we aim to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements and performance information do not have material misstatements caused by either fraud or error. Material misstatements are differences or omissions of amounts and disclosures that, in our judgement, are likely to influence the audit report addressee's overall understanding of the financial statements and performance information.</p> <p>If we find material misstatements that are not corrected, they will be referred to in the audit opinion. The Auditor-General's preference is for you to correct any material misstatements and avoid the need for them to be referred to in the audit opinion.</p> <p>An audit also involves evaluating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the appropriateness of accounting policies used and whether they have been consistently applied;• the reasonableness of the significant accounting estimates and judgements made by those charged with governance;• the appropriateness of the content and measures in any performance information;• the adequacy of the disclosures in the financial statements and performance information; and• the overall presentation of the financial statements and performance information. <p>We will ask you for written confirmation of representations made about the financial statements and performance information. In particular, we will seek confirmation that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the adoption of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate;• all material transactions have been recorded and are reflected in the financial statements and performance information; |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations have been disclosed to us; and uncorrected misstatements noted during the audit are immaterial to the financial statements and performance information. <p>Any representation made does not in any way reduce our responsibility to perform appropriate audit procedures and enquiries.</p> <p>We will ensure that the annual audit is completed by the reporting deadline or, if that is not practicable because of the non-receipt or condition of the financial statements and performance information, or for some other reason beyond our control, as soon as possible after that.</p> <p>The work papers that we produce in carrying out the audit are the property of the Auditor-General. Work papers are confidential to the Auditor-General and subject to the disclosure provisions in section 30 of the Public Audit Act 2001.</p> |
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| Responsibilities for the accounting records | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You are responsible for maintaining accounting and other records that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> correctly record and explain the transactions of the public entity; enable you to monitor the resources, activities, and entities under your control; enable the public entity's financial position to be determined with reasonable accuracy at any time; enable you to prepare financial statements and performance information that comply with legislation (and that allow the financial statements and performance information to be readily and properly audited); and are in keeping with the requirements of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. | <p>We will perform sufficient tests to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the underlying records are reliable and adequate as a basis for preparing the financial statements and performance information.</p> <p>If, in our opinion, the records are not reliable or accurate enough to enable the preparation of the financial statements and performance information and the necessary evidence cannot be obtained by other means, we will need to consider the effect on the audit opinion.</p> |

| Responsibilities for accounting and internal control systems | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You are responsible for establishing and maintaining accounting and internal control systems (appropriate to the size of the public entity), supported by written policies and procedures, designed to provide reasonable assurance as to the integrity and reliability of financial and - where applicable - performance information reporting.</p> | <p>The annual audit is not designed to identify all significant weaknesses in your accounting and internal control systems. We will review the accounting and internal control systems only to the extent required to express an opinion on the financial statements and performance information.</p> <p>We will report to you separately, on any significant weaknesses in the accounting and internal control systems that come to our notice and that we consider</p> |

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| | may be relevant to you. Any such report will provide constructive recommendations to assist you to address those weaknesses. |
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| Responsibilities for preventing and detecting fraud and error | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>The responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud and error rests with you, through the implementation and continued operation of adequate internal control systems (appropriate to the size of the public entity) supported by written policies and procedures.</p> <p>We expect you to formally address the matter of fraud, and formulate an appropriate policy on how to minimise it and (if it occurs) how it will be dealt with. Fraud also includes bribery and corruption.</p> <p>We expect you to consider reporting all instances of actual, suspected, or alleged fraud to the appropriate law enforcement agency, which will decide whether proceedings for a criminal offence should be instituted. We expect you to immediately inform us of any suspected fraud where you, and/or any individuals within the Ōtorohanga District Council with delegated authority have a reasonable basis that suspected fraud has occurred - regardless of the amount involved.</p> | <p>We design our audit to obtain reasonable, but not absolute, assurance of detecting fraud or error that would have a material effect on the financial statements and performance information. We will review the accounting and internal control systems only to the extent required for them to express an opinion on the financial statements and performance information, but we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obtain an understanding of internal control and assess its ability for preventing and detecting material fraud and error; and • report to you any significant weaknesses in internal control that come to our notice. <p>We are required to immediately advise the Office of the Auditor-General of all instances of actual, suspected, or alleged fraud.</p> <p>As part of the audit, you will be asked for written confirmation that you have disclosed all known instances of actual, suspected, or alleged fraud to us.</p> <p>If we become aware of the possible existence of fraud, whether through applying audit procedures, advice from you, or management, or by any other means, we will communicate this to you with the expectation that you will consider whether it is appropriate to report the fraud to the appropriate law enforcement agency. In the event that you do not report the fraud to the appropriate law enforcement agency, the Auditor-General will consider doing so, if it is appropriate for the purposes of protecting the interests of the public.</p> |

| Responsibilities for compliance with laws and regulations | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You are responsible for ensuring that the public entity has systems, policies, and procedures (appropriate to the size of the public entity) to ensure that all applicable legislative, regulatory, and contractual requirements that apply to the activities and functions of the public entity are complied with. Such systems, policies, and procedures should be documented.</p> | <p>We will obtain an understanding of the systems, policies, and procedures put in place for the purpose of ensuring compliance with those legislative and regulatory requirements that are relevant to the audit. Our consideration of specific laws and regulations will depend on a number of factors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relevance of the law or regulation to the audit; • our assessment of the risk of non-compliance; • the impact of non-compliance for the addressee of the audit report |

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| | <p>The way in which we will report instances of non-compliance that come to our attention will depend on considerations of materiality or significance. We will report to you and to the Auditor-General all material and significant instances of non-compliance.</p> <p>We will also report to you any significant weaknesses that we observe in internal control systems, policies, and procedures for monitoring compliance with laws and regulations.</p> |
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| Responsibilities to establish and maintain appropriate standards of conduct and personal integrity | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You should at all times take all practicable steps to ensure that your members and employees maintain high standards of conduct and personal integrity. You should document your expected standards of conduct and personal integrity in a "Code of Conduct" and, where applicable, support the "Code of Conduct" with policies and procedures.</p> <p>The expected standards of conduct and personal integrity should be determined by reference to accepted "Codes of Conduct" that apply to the public sector.</p> | <p>We will have regard to whether you maintain high standards of conduct and personal integrity – particularly in matters relating to financial management and accountability. Specifically, we will be alert for significant instances where members and employees of the public entity may not have acted in accordance with the standards of conduct and personal integrity expected of them.</p> <p>The way in which we will report instances that come to our attention will depend on significance. We will report to you and to the Auditor-General all significant departures from expected standards of conduct and personal integrity that come to our attention during the audit.</p> <p>The Auditor-General, on receiving a report from us, may, at his discretion and with consideration of its significance, decide to conduct a performance audit of, or an inquiry into, the matters raised. The performance audit or inquiry will be subject to specific terms of reference, in consultation with you. Alternatively, the Auditor-General may decide to publicly report the matter without carrying out a performance audit or inquiry.</p> |

| Responsibilities for conflicts of interest and related parties | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You should have policies and procedures to ensure that your members and employees carry out their duties free from bias.</p> <p>You should maintain a full and complete record of related parties and their interests. It is your responsibility to record and disclose related-party transactions in the financial statements and performance information in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.</p> | <p>To help determine whether your members and employees have carried out their duties free from bias, we will review information provided by you that identifies related parties, and will be alert for other material related-party transactions. Depending on the circumstances, we may enquire whether you have complied with any statutory requirements for conflicts of interest and whether these transactions have been properly recorded and disclosed in the financial statements and performance information.</p> |

| Responsibilities for publishing the audited financial statements on a website | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>You are responsible for the electronic presentation of the financial statements and performance information on the public entity's website. This includes ensuring that there are enough security and controls over information on the website to maintain the integrity of the data presented.</p> <p>If the audit report is reproduced in any medium, you should present the complete financial statements, including notes, accounting policies, and any other accountability statements.</p> | <p>Examining the controls over the electronic presentation of audited financial statements and performance information, and the associated audit report, on your website is beyond the scope of the annual audit.</p> |

| Responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 | |
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| <i>Responsibilities of the Council</i> | <i>Responsibilities of the Appointed Auditor</i> |
| <p>We expect you to work with us to ensure the health and safety of our audit staff.</p> <p>You must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of our audit staff while they are on your premises, or otherwise engaging with you on their audit work. We expect you to provide a safe and healthy work environment, which includes, but is not limited to, providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information, training, instruction, and supervision to protect them from work related health and safety risks, including inductions on workplace emergency evacuation procedures; • suitably designed workstations that support and maintain an ergonomically correct body posture, including adequate lighting and ventilation; • adequate welfare facilities, such as appropriate bathroom and washing amenities, suitable drinking water, and rest facilities; • appropriately labelled and equipped first-aid kits; • personal protective equipment (PPE) when all other control measures can't adequately eliminate or minimise risks to a worker's health and safety; and | <p>The Auditor-General and Deloitte Limited take seriously their responsibility to provide a safe working environment for audit staff. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, as a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) we will make arrangements with you to keep our audit staff safe while they are working at your premises or otherwise engaging with you on their audit work.</p> <p>We will obtain an understanding of health & safety systems, policies, and procedures put in place for the purpose of ensuring compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>We will take reasonable care of our own health and safety, and we will take reasonable care that what we do or don't do does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people.</p> <p>We will cooperate with the workplace health and safety policies and procedures of the Ōtorohanga District Council and comply with any reasonable instructions given.</p> |

- protection from offensive conduct such as aggressive slurs and/or behaviours, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults, or put-downs.

We expect you to work with us to resolve any health and safety concerns related to our audit staff.

We will monitor the health and safety of our audit staff (in particular, to ensure you are providing the things listed under your responsibilities to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for our audit staff when they are on your premises), and we may advise someone at your premises (such as a Chief Financial Officer and/or a health and safety representative) if we have a health and safety concern related to our audit staff. We will work with you to resolve any health and safety concerns related to our audit staff.