

## **Questions with regard to potential TUPE:**

### **Response from Devon Audit Partnership December 2016**

Please find set out below our answers to the questions you have raised. We trust that the response we have given meets your needs, but if you do want any further information, or wish to clarify any of our responses, please do not hesitate to contact us.

#### **1. Do you have a mission statement?**

Yes. Please see our home page on our website <https://www.devonaudit.gov.uk/>

Our aim is to :-

To enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight. We work with you, to support your goals and minimise risks which may prevent you achieving your goals. That's why the Devon Audit Partnership are auditing for achievement – your achievement.

#### **2. Do you have investors in people or any other similar type of thing?**

Yes. We are pleased to confirm that we have the Customer Service Excellence Award.

We consider that this focusses our work on providing the best service we can for our customers. The Award requires us to demonstrate continuous improvement in a wide range of areas. The Award requires that we have professional, well skilled and trained individuals who ensure we meet our customer's needs.

Please see our website <https://www.devonaudit.gov.uk/why-choose-dap/customer-satisfaction/>

#### **3. Would we be able to gain experience/try other areas to audit i.e. schools?**

Yes. We would be most pleased to work with all your staff in further developing their careers. We provide internal audit services to a wide range of not-for-profit organisations across Devon and the wider area, and we would be delighted to encourage and support you in using your skills in different settings and in different sectors.

We strongly believe that the skill of internal audit is transferable across organisations and across all risks, and that auditors can gain confidence and enhance their skills by working with other organisations, such as schools.

You can find a summary of the partners that we work with on our website at <https://www.devonaudit.gov.uk/why-choose-dap/client-partners/>

#### **4. Would our move be classed as continuous service?**

Yes. Staff would transfer to DAP with continuous service. DAP is "hosted" by Devon County Council and we adhere to DCC terms and conditions for staff.

**5. Would we be allocated other work if work/hours at Mid Devon were reduced?**

Yes. Further to question 3 above, we would look to widen your teams' skill set so that they can provide internal audit at a range of organisations.

We would look to work with individuals, at their pace, to develop their skills, but the intention would be to provide each with greater learning opportunities that could then be used on our wider client base, should the work at Mid Devon be reduced.

**6. Where would we be based?**

Staff would continue to be based at Mid Devon. However, we cover work across the County and if staff would wish to seek an alternative placement then that is something we could consider.

**7. Are travel expenses paid for working on audits which are carried out away from your normal place of work?**

Yes. Members of staff are given a "work base" – for Mid Devon staff we expect this to be Mid Devon offices in Tiverton.

When working on an assignment that is not at Mid Devon then travel expenses will be paid. The amount of mileage claimable is, generally, the distance between Mid Devon offices and the work location, less your normal home to Mid Devon mileage.

We attach the Devon County Council scheme which provides more detail. Section 16.1.3 provides a little more detail about how mileage claims are calculated.



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**8. Is the working time flexible?**

Yes, very much so (and please also see answer below). We appreciate that staff have different care commitments and sometimes require flexibility. We trust our staff to manage their time and work commitments and will support them to prioritise their workloads to deliver work within the expected timescales

Our core hours are 10.00 to 12.00 and 2.00 to 4.00.

We work to the flexible working arrangements of Devon County Council – please see attached for more details. <http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/jobscareers/workingfordcc/benefits.htm>

**9. Is working from home an option; either a regular or ad-hoc basis?**

Yes. We are happy to staff to work from home and appreciate that this is often the most efficient use of their time, allowing assignments to be completed "without interruption"

We are happy to support regular working from home, and ad-hoc requests / requirements as they are presented.

We do ask that the manager for the team is kept aware of requirements – we ask that employees seek agreement prior to working from home to ensure we are aware of staff movements (for example for health and safety requirements).

**10. Do you have a pension scheme? Is there any employer contribution?**

Yes. Staff are entitled to join the Local Government Pensions Scheme. This scheme is funded through employee and employer contributions. The employer contribution is set by actuarial valuations and does vary from valuation to valuation. Current contribution rates are 19.75%

Please see more details about our scheme at

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/jobscareers/workingfordcc/benefits.htm>

**11. Do you provide a childcare voucher scheme?**

Yes. Please see more details about our scheme at

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/jobscareers/workingfordcc/benefits.htm>

**12. At Mid Devon, Union membership is encouraged, is this something that your partnership also supports?**

Yes. We support union membership. A number of DAP employees are members of GMB or Unison. At the County Hall site is also the Coaver Club facility which is operated by Unison and includes facilities for member use.

**13. What training options are available? Is this something you could provide?**

We know that our most valuable asset is our staff, and we place a lot of emphasis on ensuring staff are appropriately trained.

As you would expect from a professional organisation, we support professional training for staff. Currently this is via the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA). We also support other professional training such as ITIL and Encase Computer Forensics.

We also support a range of ongoing awareness and training at, for example, IIA and CIPFA events during the year.

We know that training is often home counties based, and will pay for travel and subsistence costs as required.

We encourage staff to make use of “desk based” training – i.e. taking part in webinars and other on-line training, and other resource sites such as TIS Online and the IIA website.

Each year, audit managers will consider the development needs of each member of the team and feed these into a wider discussion on training for our staff. This in turn is used to inform an annual consideration of the wider skill set required by DAP and identify any organisational training gaps that need to be considered.

Individual training needs are then considered and approvals made.

For wider organisational needs, we will consider what is required. This year we invited James Paterson to run a workshop for us on “lean auditing”.

However, our training budget is not “unlimited”. Our training budget is set at around £10,000 per year, which has been appropriate for previous years, but is always under review. We look to support as many training opportunities as we can, and make sure this budget is used to maximum effect.

We further support staff by providing time off for exams and for study leave

**14. What would the salary be? Are there opportunities for career progression?**

We employ a range of staff to deliver our work. Our current roles grades and salaries are as follows:-

<b>Role</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Spinal Pts</b>	<b>Salary from...</b>	<b>...to</b>
Auditor 1	Grade E	23 to 28	£21,057	£24,717
Auditor 2	Grade F	29 to 34	£25,694	£29,854
Senior Auditor	Grade G	35 to 39	£30,480	£34,196
Audit Manager	Grade H	40 to 44	£35,093	£38,789

We support all staff to progress their careers, but this needs to be by way of a competitive process.

For example, we currently have a senior auditor vacancy and in-house candidates have been given the opportunity to demonstrate that they can fulfil the role. Should internal candidates not demonstrate all the skills we need, then we should look to advertise the job externally.

**15. MDDC currently pay for our annual subscriptions (AAT, IIA & ACCA), is this a something that you provide?**

At present Devon County Council does not support payment of annual subscriptions and, if you transferred to DAP on DCC conditions, then we would, unfortunately, not be able to support such payments.

However, it may be that as part of the transfer process this is made as a “special request” by Mid Devon and we would be prepared to consider this.

**16. Would we fall under your process and procedures or Mid Devon for things such as sick pay, maternity, code of conduct and flexible working?**

At time of TUPE you can either choose to transfer to DAP (Devon County Council) Terms and Conditions or remain on Mid Devon terms.

Devon operate under as a “healthy work environment” – more details can be found at <http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/jobscareers/workingfordcc/benefits.htm>

We trust that the above has been of use to you, but please feel free to raise any further questions that you may have.

Kind regards,

**Rob Hutchins and the Team at Devon Audit Partnership.**