



HM Treasury

# Financial Reporting Advisory Board

## User and Preparer Advisory Group update

Issue:	To provide the Board with a summary of the fourth meeting of the User and Preparer Advisory Group held on 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2021.
Impact on guidance:	N/A
IAS/IFRS adaptation?	N/A
Impact on WGA?	N/A
IPSAS compliant?	N/A
Interpretation for the public sector context?	N/A
Impact on budgetary and Estimates regimes?	N/A
Alignment with National Accounts	N/A
Recommendation:	The Board is invited to note the discussion points from the fourth meeting of the User and Preparer Advisory Group.
Timing:	Ongoing.

### DETAIL

#### **Background**

1. The User and Preparer Advisory Group is a forum for users and preparers of government financial reporting to discuss developments within the financial reporting landscape.
2. The Group aims to meet three times a year. This meeting was the second in 2021 and held on 4<sup>th</sup> October. Due to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic, there will not be a third meeting held in 2021.

3. FRAB agreed there would be no direct governance relationship between FRAB and the Group, but that FRAB would receive sight of the discussion points from each meeting and the forward plan.
4. Discussion at the Board effectiveness review meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020, noted the importance of access to feedback from users and the User Preparer Advisory Group is one route of access.

### ***Summary and recommendation***

5. The group's discussion at this meeting focussed on receiving updates from members including HM Treasury, and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). The group received updates on the FRAB, Central government reporting & timetable, the NAO, WGA, BEIS consultation, new departmental planning and performance framework and an ICAEW update.
6. The group discussed the delays to some of the audits of arm's length bodies (ALBs) and sought clarification on when the timetable will revert to pre-recess. A consideration was also put forward on whether the accounts of ALBs which deliver projects that Parliament and the public have a significant interest in, should be prioritised.
7. The group commented how this year, audits are addressing fraud and error particularly in respect of covid related schemes.
8. The group was informed that a thematic review on sustainability reporting is being considered in the coming months and were requested to provide suggestions on other areas of interest for thematic reviews.
9. The group expressed particular interest in the new FRAB sustainability working group and questioned the scope and membership that had been decided. It was also raised whether the scope of sustainability reporting in the public sector would be expanded to cover the concepts of integrated reporting.
10. The group learnt of the challenges facing the 2019-20 WGA publication and the outlook on the 2020-21 WGA process. The group raised the ongoing problems with local authority resources and also queried whether there are sufficient resources in HMT to ensure the WGA is delivered earlier.
11. The group heard how single departmental plans (SDPs) are being reformed and being replaced with outcome delivery plans, with the goal being more evidence based.
12. The draft minutes from the meeting are shared with the Board below (Appendix 1) however, please note whilst these have been shared with the Group's members, they are still to be formally agreed by the User Preparer Advisory Group and are being shared in confidence. Once formally agreed by UPAG at the next meeting, they will be published on gov.uk.
13. The Board is invited to note the contents of this paper but is also invited to make any comments on the discussion points from the third meeting of the User and Preparer Advisory Group.