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Our ref JT/016let766
Contact Julie Talbot
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15 May 2014

Dear Steve

Annual audit fee 2014/15

I am writing to confirm the audit work and fee that we propose for the 2014/15 financial year at Blackpool Council. Our proposals are based on the risk-based approach to audit planning as set out in the Code of Audit Practice and work mandated by the Audit Commission.

As we have not yet completed our audit for 2013/14 the audit planning process for 2014/15, including the risk assessment will continue as the year progresses and fees will be reviewed and updated as necessary. We will naturally keep you informed.

The proposed indicative audit and certification fees for 2014/15 are shown below, along with a comparison to the prior year's audit. All fees are exclusive of VAT.

Audit area	Planned fee 2014/15	Planned fee 2013/14
Code of Audit Practice audit fee	145,800	145,800
Certification of grant claims & returns	18,210	19,615

The audit fee is unchanged from the planned fee for 2013/14 and is in line with the scale fee recommended by the Audit Commission.

We are currently awaiting final confirmation from the Audit Commission in relation to the proposed grant certification fee for 2014/15. Once this has been agreed, I will communicate this to you and provide more details on our certification work.

DCLG and HM Treasury are working with grant-paying bodies to develop assurance arrangements for certifying claims and returns following the closure of the Commission. Subject

to confirmation, we expect these new arrangements to apply to 2014/15 claims and returns and therefore the following schemes to fall outside the Commission's arrangements:

- Pooling of housing capital receipts (CFB06);
- Teachers' pensions return (PEN05);

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has asked the Audit Commission to prepare auditor guidance for the certification of housing benefit subsidy for 2014/15. We will therefore continue to certify the housing benefit subsidy claim under the Audit Commission's arrangements. It is expected that arrangements for 2015/16 onwards will be made on the same basis by an independent private company to be set up by the Local Government Association, which will take on transitional responsibility for the management of the Audit Commission's audit contracts following its closure in March 2015.

The indicative fees are based on a number of assumptions, including that you will provide us with complete and materially accurate financial statements, with good quality supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes. It is imperative that you achieve this. If this is not the case and we have to complete more work than was envisaged, we will need to charge additional fees for this work. Our assumptions are set out in more detail in Appendix 1 to this letter.

In setting the fee at this level, we have assumed that the general level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements and certification work is not significantly different from that identified for the current year's audit. A more detailed audit plan will be issued later this year. This will detail the risks identified, planned audit procedures and (if required) any changes in fee. If we need to make any significant amendments to the audit fee during the course of the audit, I will first discuss this with you and then prepare a report for the Finance and Audit Committee, outlining the reasons why the fee needs to change.

We expect to issue a number of reports relating to our work over the course of the audit. These are listed at Appendix 2.

The proposed fee excludes any additional work we may agree to undertake at the request of Blackpool Council. Any such piece of work will be separately discussed and a detailed project specification agreed with you.

The key members of our audit team for the 2014/15 audit are:

Name	Role	Contact details
Trevor Rees	Partner	Trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk 0161 246 4063
Julie Talbot	Manager	Julie.talbot@kpmg.co.uk 0113 231 3516

Sukhsimran Singh	Assistant Manager	Sukhsimran.singh@kpmg.co.uk 0161 246 4668
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We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If you are in any way dissatisfied, or would like to discuss how we can improve our service, please contact me.

If we are unable to satisfy your concerns, you have the right to make a formal complaint to the Audit Commission. The complaints procedure is set out in the leaflet '*Something to Complain About*', which is available from the Commission's website (www.audit-commission.gov.uk) or on request.

Yours sincerely



Trevor Rees
Partner

Appendix 1 – Audit fee assumptions

In setting the fee, I have assumed that:

- the level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements is not significantly different from that identified for 2013/14;
- you will inform us of significant developments impacting on our audit;
- internal audit meets the appropriate professional standards;
- you will identify and implement any changes required under the CIPFA IFRS-based Code of Practice on local Authority Accounting within your 2014/15 financial statements;
- your financial statements will be made available for audit in line with the timetable we agree with you;
- good quality working papers and records will be provided to support the financial statements in line with our *prepared by client* request and by the date we agree with you;
- requested information will be provided within agreed timescales;
- prompt responses will be provided to draft reports;
- complete and accurate claims and returns are provided for certification, with supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes; and
- additional work will not be required to address questions or objections raised by local government electors or for special investigations such as those arising from disclosures under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Improvements to the above factors may allow reductions to the audit fee in future years. Where these assumptions are not met, we will be required to undertake additional work and charge an increased audit fee. The fee for the audit of the financial statements will be re-visited when we issue the detailed audit plan.

Any changes to our audit plan and fee will be agreed with you. Changes may be required if:

- new residual audit risks emerge;
- additional work is required by the Audit Commission, KPMG or other regulators; or
- additional work is required as a result of changes in legislation, professional standards or as a result of changes in financial reporting.

Appendix 2: Planned outputs

Our reports will be discussed and agreed with the appropriate officers before being issued to the Finance and Audit Committee.

Planned output	Indicative date
External audit plan	February 2015
Report to those charged with governance (ISA260 report)	September 2015
Auditor's report giving the opinion on the financial statements, value for money conclusion and audit certificate	September 2015
Opinion on Whole of Government Accounts return	September 2015
Annual audit letter	November 2015
Certification of grant claims and returns report	February 2016