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Dear Sharon

Planned audit fee for 2013/14

The Audit Commission has set its proposed work programme and scales of fees for 2013/14. In this letter we set out details of the audit fee for the Council along with the scope and timing of our work and details of our team.

Scale fee

The Audit Commission defines the scale audit fee as “the fee required by auditors to carry out the work necessary to meet their statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. It represents the best estimate of the fee required to complete an audit where the audited body has no significant audit risks and it has in place a sound control environment that ensures the auditor is provided with complete and materially accurate financial statements with supporting working papers within agreed timeframes.”

The Council's scale fee for 2013/14 has been set by the Audit Commission at £60,135 which compares to the audit fee of £60,135 for 2012/13.

Further details of the work programme and individual scale fees for all audited bodies are set out on the Audit Commission's website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/audit-regime/audit-fees/201314-fees-work-programme.

The audit planning process for 2013/14, including the risk assessment, will continue as the year progresses and fees will be reviewed and updated as necessary as our work progresses.

Scope of the audit fee

The scale fee covers:

- our audit of your financial statements
- our work to reach a conclusion on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources (the value for money conclusion)
- our work on your whole of government accounts return.

Chartered Accountants

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Value for Money conclusion

Under the Audit Commission Act, we must be satisfied that the Council has adequate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, focusing on the arrangements for:

- securing financial resilience; and
- prioritising resources within tighter budgets.

We undertake a risk assessment to identify any significant risks which we will need to address before reaching our value for money conclusion. We will assess the Council's financial resilience as part of our work on the VfM conclusion and a separate report of our findings will be provided.

Certification of grant claims and returns

The Council's composite indicative grant certification fee has been set by the Audit Commission at £27,400. This indicative fee assumes that complete working papers to support all claims and returns will be provided within agreed timeframes. It also assumes that work on the 2013/14 housing benefit and council tax benefit subsidy claim will continue to be performed under the HB Count framework, and that under this framework additional 40+ testing will not be required.

Billing schedule

Fees will be billed as follows:

Main Audit fee	£
September 2013	15,033.75
December 2013	15,033.75
March 2014	15,033.75
June 2014	15,033.75
Grant Certification	
June 2014	27,400
Total	87,535

Outline audit timetable

We will undertake our audit planning and interim audit procedures from November 2013. Upon completion of this phase of our work we will issue a detailed audit plan setting out our findings and details of our audit approach. Our final accounts audit and work on the VfM conclusion will be completed in September 2013 and work on the whole of government accounts return in September 2013.

Phase of work	Timing	Outputs	Comments
Audit planning and interim audit	November 2013 – March 2014	Audit plan	The plan summarises the findings of our audit planning and our approach to the audit of the Council's accounts and VfM.
Final accounts audit	June – September 2014	Report to those charged with governance	This report sets out the findings of our accounts audit and VfM work for the consideration of those charged with governance.
VfM conclusion	January – September 2014	Report to those charged with governance	As above
Financial resilience	January – September 2014	Financial resilience report	Report summarising the outcome of our work.
Whole of government accounts	September 2014	Opinion on the WGA return	This work will be completed alongside the accounts audit.
Annual audit letter	October 2014	Annual audit letter to the Council	The letter will summarise the findings of all aspects of our work.
Grant certification	June – December 2014	Grant certification report	A report summarising the findings of our grant certification work

Our team

The key members of the audit team for 2013/14 are:

	Name	Phone Number	E-mail
Engagement Lead	Darren Wells	01293 554120	Darren.J.Wells@uk.gt.com
Engagement Manager	Trevor Greenlee	01293 554071	Trevor.Greenlee@uk.gt.com
Audit Executive	Graham Short	01293 554088	Graham.Short@uk.gt.com

Additional work

The scale fee excludes any work requested by the Council that we may agree to undertake outside of our Code audit. Each additional piece of work will be separately agreed and a detailed project specification and fee agreed with the Council.

Quality assurance

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 in the first instance. Alternatively you may wish to contact Paul Dossett our Public Sector Assurance regional lead partner (paul.dossett@uk.gt.com).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DWells", enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Darren Wells
For Grant Thornton UK LLP