

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

26 January 2015

### Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

#### Part 1- Public

#### Matters for Information

##### **1 GRANT CERTIFICATION WORK 2013/14**

**This report summarises the findings from the certification by Grant Thornton of the 2013/14 housing benefit subsidy claim. The report of the external auditors is attached at [Annex 1].**

##### **1.1 Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim**

- 1.1.1 For the year 2013/14, the Council's gross expenditure for Housing Benefit totalled £34.6 million. By way of comparison, this level of expenditure represents around 40% of gross expenditure of the Council as a whole.
- 1.1.2 The majority of this expenditure is met by monthly instalments paid to the Council by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), based on initial and mid-year estimates provided by the Council.
- 1.1.3 A final claim is submitted to the DWP at the end of the financial year including a balancing sum. This sum is the difference between the amount the Council has received through the year based on estimates and the subsidy due based on actual expenditure. The balance owed to the Council to the DWP in 2013/14 was £3,567.

The claim is subject to audit carried out by an auditor appointed by the DWP, in our case Grant Thornton on behalf of the Audit Commission. Any weaknesses or errors identified during the inspection are reported to the DWP in a letter from the auditor. The term 'qualification' is used for any issues reported in the letter.

##### **1.2 Legal Implications**

- 1.2.1 These are mandatory services administered at a level compliant with the legislation and satisfying these inspections.

### **1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.3.1 The invoiced fee for certification work for 2013/14 was £24,112 as per the estimate supplied by Grant Thornton with their fees earlier in the year.

### **1.4 Risk Assessment**

1.4.1 The report highlights the recommendations arising from the certification work and the subsequent actions agreed with officers.

Background papers:

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Nil

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