

Graham Farrant  
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Thurrock Council  
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18 April 2013

Ref: 2014 Thurrock Fee letter  
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Dear Graham

**Thurrock Council**  
**Audit and certification fees 2013-14**

We are writing to confirm the 2013-14 audit and certification work we propose to undertake. The 2013-14 fees reflect the risk-based approach promoted by the Audit Commission for audit and certification work.

**Planned audit fee**

The audit fee covers the work we perform to provide our:

- ▶ Opinion on the financial statements
- ▶ Value for money conclusion
- ▶ Report to the National Audit Office on the Whole of Government Accounts

The Audit Commission has set scales of fees as part of its five year procurement exercise. It has indicated scale fees are not liable to increase in that period unless there is a change in scope. For 2013-14 the Audit Commission has set a scale fee for each audited body. The scale fee is based on certain assumptions, including:

- ▶ The overall level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements, Whole of Government Accounts and proper arrangements is not significantly different from that of the prior year
- ▶ Reliance can be placed on the work of internal audit to the maximum extent possible under auditing standards
- ▶ The financial statements will be available in line with the agreed timetable
- ▶ Working papers and records provided in support of the financial statements are of a good quality and are provided in line with agreed timetable
- ▶ Prompt responses are provided to draft audit reports

Meeting these assumptions will help ensure the delivery of an audit at the audit scale fee.

We have set the planned audit fee at the scale fee level which assumes the overall level of risk is not significantly different from that of 2012-13. The 2012-13 audit is in progress. We will update our risk

assessment and undertake more detailed planning for the 2013-14 audit after we complete the 2012-13 audit.

Where the Department for Work and Pensions raises queries on the certified 2012-13 housing and council tax benefit claim further work and extra fee will be required.

### **Certification fee**

The Audit Commission has set a composite indicative fee for certification work for each audited body. The indicative fee is based on actual 2011-12 certification fees adjusted to reflect the fact that a number of schemes will no longer require auditor certification, and incorporating a 40 per cent reduction.

The composite indicative fee is based on the expectation that an audited body is able to provide the auditor with complete and materially accurate claims and returns, with supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes.

The indicative certification fee for 2013-14 relates to work on grant claims and returns for the year ended 31 March 2014. We have set the certification fee at the composite indicative fee level which assumes the same level of work on claims and returns as 2011-12. We will update our risk assessment after we complete 2012-13 certification work and to reflect further changes in the Audit Commission's certification arrangements.

### **Summary of fees**

	Planned fee 2013-14 £	Planned fee 2012-13 £	Actual fee 2011-12 £
Code audit fee	177,227	177,227	295,380
Certification fee	26,600	28,950	53,471

The planned audit and certification fees will be billed in quarterly instalments of £50,956.

Any additional work we may agree to undertake (outside of the Audit Code of Practice) will be separately negotiated and agreed with you in advance.

### **Audit plan**

We will issue our 2013-14 audit plan for the audit of the financial statements, Whole of Government Accounts and proper arrangements by March 2013. This will detail the financial statement and value for money conclusion risks identified, planned audit procedures to respond to those risks, and any changes in fee. Should we need to make any significant amendments to the audit fee during the course of the audit, we will discuss this in the first instance with the Director of Finance and Corporate Governance and, if necessary, prepare a report outlining the reasons for the fee change for discussion with the Standards and Audit Committee.

**Audit team**

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

Debbie Hanson  
Director

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Tel: 07974 006715

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Wendy Borgartz  
Manager

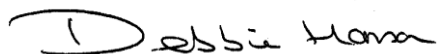
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We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If at any time you would like to discuss with us how our service to you could be improved, or if you are dissatisfied with the service you are receiving, please contact me. If you prefer an alternative route, please contact Steve Varley, our Managing Partner, 1 More London Place, London, SE1 2AF. We undertake to look into any complaint carefully and promptly and to do all we can to explain the position to you. Should you remain dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, you may of course take matters up with our professional institute.

Yours faithfully



Debbie Hanson  
Director  
Ernst & Young LLP  
United Kingdom

cc. Martin Hone, Director of Finance and Corporate Governance  
Cllr Tunde Ojetola, Chair of the Audit Committee