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Dear Scott

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 Stevenage Borough 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 £84,438, which is unchanged from the audit fee 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.

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,

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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 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 £14,400.

Billing schedule

Fees will be billed as follows:

Main Audit fee	£
September 2013	21,110
December 2013	21,110
March 2014	21,109
June 2014	21,109
Grant Certification	
June 2014	14,400
Total	98,838

Outline audit timetable

We will undertake our audit planning and interim audit procedures in early 2014. 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 by September 2013 as well as work on the whole of government accounts return.

Phase of work	Timing	Outputs	Comments
Audit planning and interim audit	Feb and Mar 2013	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	July to Sept 2014	Audit Findings (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	Jan to Sept 2014	Audit Findings (Report to those charged with governance)	As above
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 to 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	Phil Westerman	0207 728 2548	philip.r.westerman@uk.gt.com
Engagement Manager	Terry Blackman	0207 728 3194	terry.blackman@uk.gt.com
Audit Executive	Sandeep Bhakar	0207 728 2077	sandeep.bhakar@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



Philip Westerman
For Grant Thornton UK LLP