

The Annual Audit Letter for Stevenage Borough Council

Year ended 31 March 2015

27 October 2015

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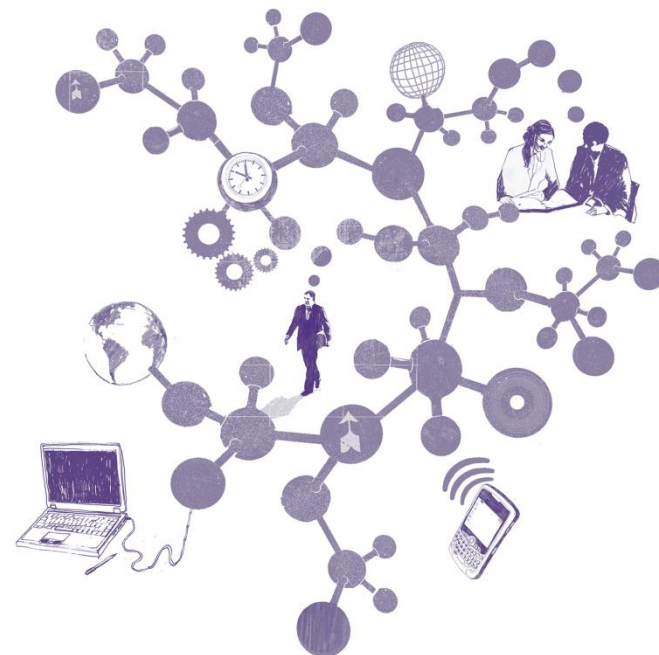
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Key messages

Our Annual Audit Letter summarises the key findings arising from the work that we have carried out at Stevenage Borough Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2015.

The Letter is intended to communicate key messages to the Council and external stakeholders, including members of the public. Our annual work programme, which includes nationally prescribed and locally determined work, has been undertaken in accordance with the Audit Plan that we issued on 23 March 2015 and was conducted in accordance with the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice, International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and other guidance issued by the Audit Commission and Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited.

Financial statements audit (including audit opinion)	<p>We reported our findings arising from the audit of the financial statements in our Audit Findings Report on 23 September to the Audit Committee. The key messages reported were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As in previous years your draft financial statements were of a very high standard.• You worked hard to improve the presentation of your financial statements to make them easier to understand.• Your financial statements were supported by an excellent set of working papers and our audit was again been greatly helped by early discussions on potential financial reporting issues. <p>We issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's 2014/15 financial statements on 30 September 2015, meeting the deadline set by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Our opinion confirms that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and of the income and expenditure recorded by the Council.</p>
Value for Money (VfM) conclusion	<p>We issued an unqualified VfM conclusion for 2014/15 on 30 September 2015.</p> <p>On the basis of our work, and having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria published by the Audit Commission, we are satisfied that in all significant respects the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2015.</p>
Certification of housing benefit grant claim	<p>We plan to certify the Council's 2014/15 housing benefit grant claim by the deadline of 30 November 2015 set by the Department of Work and Pensions.</p>
Audit fee	<p>Our fee for 2014/15 was £84,438 excluding VAT which was in line with our planned fee for the year and was unchanged from the previous year. Further detail is included within appendix B.</p>

Appendix A: Reports issued and fees

We confirm below the fees charged for the audit and non-audit services.

Fees for audit services

	Per Audit plan £	Actual fees £
Council audit	84,438	84,438
Housing benefit grant certification fee	12,180	12,180
Total audit fees	106,618	106,618

Fees for other services

Service	Fees £
Audit related services	
• Pooling of housing capital receipts	1,000
• HCA Decent Homes backlog	1,800
Non-audit related services	
• Tax services [including work done 2015/16]	23,000

Reports issued

Report	Date issued
Audit Plan	March 2015
Audit Findings Report	September 2015
Annual Audit Letter	October 2015



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