

The Annual Audit Letter for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

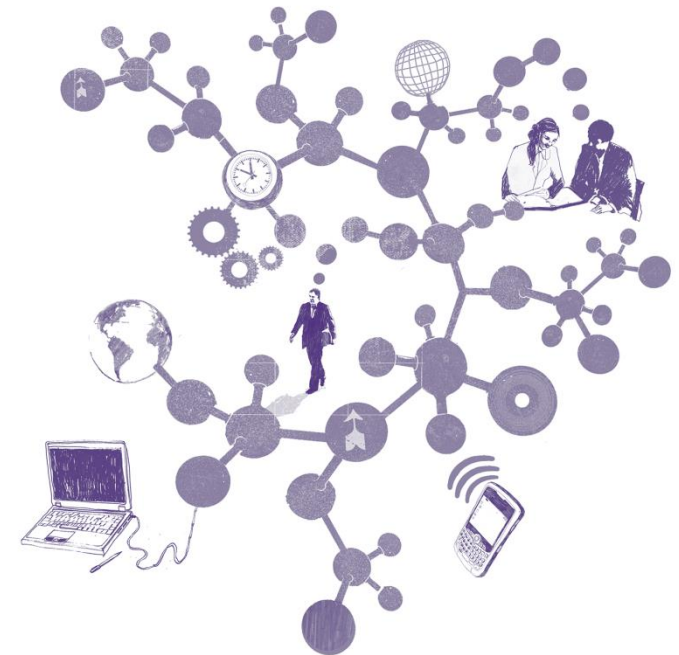
Year ended 31 March 2014

22 October 2014

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Key messages

Our Annual Audit Letter summarises the key findings arising from the work that we have carried out at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2014.

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 in June 2014 which was reported to the 1 July Audit and Governance Committee 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.

<p>Financial statements audit (including audit opinion)</p>	<p>We reported our findings arising from the audit of the financial statements in our Audit Findings Report on 23rd September to the Audit and Governance Committee. The key messages reported were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for property valuations need to be reviewed to ensure there is on-going compliance with the CIPFA code. <p>We issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's 2013/14 financial statements on 25th September 2014, 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>
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<p>Value for Money (VfM) conclusion</p>	<p>We issued an unqualified VfM conclusion for 2013/14 on 25 September 2014.</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 2014.</p>
<p>Whole of Government Accounts</p>	<p>We reviewed the consolidation pack which the Council prepared to support the production of Whole of Government Accounts. We reported that the Council's pack fell below the audit threshold for 2013/14 and provided the consistency information required by the NAO.</p>
<p>Certification of grant claims and returns</p>	<p>Following changes to grant certification regimes the Council has only one grant claim that requires auditor certification; the claim for housing benefits the deadline for which is 28th November 2014. Our certification work is currently in progress and we will report the final position and final certification fee in December.</p>
<p>Audit fee</p>	<p>Our fee for 2013/14 was £68,306 excluding VAT which was an increase to our planned fee of £67,406, reflecting additional audit work following significant accounting changes to the Business Rates Regime. Further detail is included within appendix A.</p>

Appendix A: Reports issued and fees

We confirm below the fee charged for the audit and confirm there were no fees for the provision of non audit services.

Fees

	Per Audit plan £	Updated fees £
Audit Fee	67,406	68,306
Grant certification fee *	18,400	16,192
Total fees	85,806	84,498

There is additional audit fee of £900 is in respect of work on material business rates balances. This additional work was necessary as auditors are no longer required to carry out work to certify NDR3 claims. The additional fee is 50% of the average fee previously charged for NDR3 certifications for district Council's and is subject to agreement by the Audit Commission. This increase is offset by the £2,208 reduction in grant certification fee arising from the removal of Council Tax benefit within the Housing Benefit grant claim, the certification of which is in progress. * The final grant certification fee will be reported in December.

Fees for other services

Service	Fees £
None	Nil

Reports issued

Report	Date reported to Audit and Governance Committee
Audit Plan	1 July
Audit Findings Report	23 September
Certification report	9 December
VfM – Reported in Audit Findings Report	23 September
Annual Audit Letter	9 December



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