

Our ref KLM/CW

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Dear Denise

Certification work for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council for year ended 31 March 2014

We are required to certify certain claims and returns submitted by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council ('the Council'). This certification typically takes place six to nine months after the claim period and represents a final but important part of the process to confirm the Council's entitlement to funding.

Arrangements for certification are prescribed by the Audit Commission, which agrees the scope of the work with each relevant government department or agency, and issues auditors with a Certification Instruction (CI) for each specific claim or return.

We have certified 2 claims and returns for the financial year 2013/14 relating to expenditure of £64.8 million. Further details of the claims certified are set out in Appendix A.

There are no significant issues arising from our certification work which we wish to highlight for your attention. We are satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements to compile complete, accurate and timely claims and returns for audit certification within the Audit Commission regime.

The indicative fee for 2013/14 for the Council is based on the final 2011/12 certification fees, reflecting the amount of work required by the auditor to certify the claims and returns in that year. Fees for schemes no longer requiring certification (such as the national non-domestic rates return) have been removed. The fees for certification of housing benefit subsidy claims have been reduced by 12 per cent, to reflect the removal of council tax benefit from the scheme. The indicative scale fee set by the Audit Commission for the Council for 2013/14, prior to the adjustment for changes to the housing benefit was £25,000 this has been reduced to £20,551 This is set out in more detail in Appendix B.

Chartered Accountants

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We also completed the certification of the Council's Section 31 Grant - Local Transport Plan for the first time in 2013/14. We agreed with you a fee variation of £3,161 in respect of the work required to certify this grant because it was not reflected in the indicative scale fee from the Audit Commission. We are awaiting Audit Commission's confirmation of this fee which will a revised total fee for certification work of £23,712.

Yours sincerely

Karen Murray- Director
For Grant Thornton UK LLP

Appendix A - Details of claims and returns certified for 2013/14

Claim or return	Value	Amended?	Amendment (£)	Qualified?	Comments
Housing Benefits Subsidy Claim	£57,344,855	Yes	(£1,706)	Yes	<p>A Qualification Letter was issued in respect of Non Housing Revenue Account Rent Rebates. We were required to review and report on this because of errors in the previous year.</p> <p>Overall, there was a reduction in the number and type of errors we identified compared to the previous year.</p>
Section 31 Grant - Local Transport Plan – Major Projects	£7,479,766	No	N/A	No	N/a

Appendix B: Fees for 2013/14 certification work

Claim or return	2012/13 fee (£)	2013/14 indicative fee (£)	2013/14 actual fee (£)	Variance – year on year (£)	Explanation for variances
Housing benefits subsidy claim (BEN01)	22,590	25,000	20,551	- 2,039	Reduction due to removal of council tax benefit from certification requirements.
Local Transport Plan – Major Projects (TRA011)	N/a	N/a	3,161	-	N/a