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25 April 2018

Ref: NH / CDC / 2018/19 Fee

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Dear Yvonne

Annual Audit 2018/19

We are writing to confirm the audit that we propose to undertake for the 2018/19 financial year at Cherwell District Council.

From 2018/19, new arrangements for local auditor appointment set out in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 apply for principal local government and police bodies. These audited bodies are responsible for making their own arrangements for the audit of the accounts and certification of the housing benefit subsidy claim. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) has appointed auditors for bodies that have opted into the national scheme. Appointments were made for the duration of the five-year appointing period, covering the audits of the accounts for 2018/19 to 2022/23. Appointments for all bodies that had opted into the appointing person scheme before 9 March 2017 were confirmed, following consultation, in December 2017.

Indicative audit fee

For the 2018/19 financial year, PSAA has set the scale fee for each audited body that have opted into its national auditor appointment scheme. Following consultation on its Work Programme and Scale of Fees, PSAA has reduced the 2018/19 scale audit fee for all opted-in bodies by 23 per cent from the fees applicable for 2017/18.

The fee reflects the risk-based approach to audit planning set out in the National Audit Office's Code of Audit Practice for the audit of local public bodies.

The audit fee covers the:

- Audit of the financial statements
- Value for money conclusion
- Whole of Government accounts.

For Cherwell District Council our indicative fee is set at the scale fee level. This indicative fee is based on certain assumptions, including:

- The overall level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements is not significantly different from that of the prior year
- Officers meeting the agreed timetable of deliverables;
- Our accounts opinion and value for money conclusion being unqualified;
- Appropriate quality of documentation is provided by Cherwell District Council;
- There is an effective control environment; and
- Prompt responses are provided to our draft reports.

Meeting these assumptions will help ensure the delivery of our audit at the indicative audit fee which is set out in the table below.

As we have not yet completed our audit for 2017/18, our audit planning process for 2018/19 will continue as the year progresses. Fees will be reviewed and updated as necessary, within the parameters of our contract.

Summary of fees

	Indicative fee 2018/19	Planned fee 2017/18	Proposed fee 2016/17
Total Code audit fee	£40,138	£52,127	£83,127
Certification of housing benefit subsidy claim	N/A	£8,844	£12,495

The proposed Code audit fee for 2016/17 includes a variation to the scale fee of £31,000. This has been agreed with the Council. We are now seeking approval from PSAA for this variation. The variation relates to additional work arising from the delays to production of the 2016/17 accounts and the valuation of property, plant and equipment, work undertaken on the Council's Group Accounts, and our consideration of matters raised with us by a locale elector. We consider this work to be outside the scope of the PSAA scale fee.

The appointment of an auditor to certify the Council's 2018/19 housing benefit subsidy claim is not covered by the PSAA appointment, hence is shown as not applicable here.

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

Billing

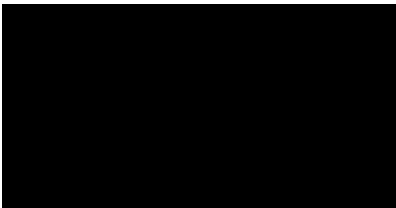
The indicative audit fee will be billed in 4 quarterly instalments of £10,035.

Audit plan

We expect to issue our Audit Planning Report in January 2019. This will communicate any significant financial statement risks identified, planned audit procedures to respond to those risks and any changes in fee. It will also set out the significant risks identified in relation to the value for money conclusion. 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 Executive Director of Finance and Governance and, if necessary, prepare a report outlining the reasons for the fee change for discussion with the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

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 as your Engagement Lead. 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 sincerely



Neil Harris
Associate Partner
For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

cc. Adele Taylor, Executive Director of Finance and Governance (Interim)
Councillor Ian Corkin, Chair of Audit Committee