

Dear Maria,

Re: Letter of Representations

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the council financial statements of Cherwell District Council (“the Council”) for the year ended 31 March 2020. We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether the council financial statements give a true and fair view of the Council financial position of Cherwell District Council as of 31 March 2020 and of its financial performance (or operations) and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with, for the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 for the Council.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our council financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing, which involves an examination of the accounting system, internal control and related data to the extent you considered necessary in the circumstances, and is not designed to identify - nor necessarily be expected to disclose - all fraud, shortages, errors and other irregularities, should any exist.

Accordingly, we make the following representations, which are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

A. Financial statements and Financial Records

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, under the relevant statutory authorities, for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 for the Council.
2. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Council, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the council financial statements. We believe the Council financial statements referred to above give a true and fair view of the financial position, financial performance (or results of operations) and cash flows of the Council in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the council financial statements.
3. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the Council financial statements are appropriately described in the Council financial statements.
4. As members of management of the Council, we believe that the Council have a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 for the Council that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. We have disclosed to you any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that we have made to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our system of internal controls.

5. We believe that the effects of any unadjusted audit differences, summarised in the accompanying schedule, accumulated by you during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the council financial statements taken as a whole. We have not corrected these differences identified and brought to our attention by the auditor because *[specify reasons for not correcting misstatement]*.

B. Non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible for determining that the Council's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible for identifying and addressing any noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

2. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.

3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the Council financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

4. We have disclosed to you, and provided you full access to information and any internal investigations relating to, all instances of identified or suspected non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud, known to us that may have affected the Council (regardless of the source or form and including, without limitation, allegations by "whistleblowers") including non-compliance matters:

- involving financial statements;
- related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Council's financial statements;
- related to laws and regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the Council's activities, its ability to continue to operate, or to avoid material penalties;
- involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal controls, or others; or
- in relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other non-compliance with laws and regulations communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

C. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions

1. We have provided you with:

- Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and all material transactions, events and conditions are reflected in the council financial statements, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Council and committees (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on 18 November 2020.

4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the year ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the council financial statements.

5. We believe that the significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

6. We have disclosed to you, and the Council has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the council financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.

D. Liabilities and Contingencies

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to you and are appropriately reflected in the council financial statements.

2. We have informed you of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.

3. We have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related litigation and claims, both actual and contingent. No guarantees have been given to third parties.

E. Subsequent Events

1. Other than those described in Note 6 to the council financial statements, there have been no events, including events related to the COVID-19 pandemic, subsequent to year end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the council financial statements or notes thereto.

F. Other Information

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information.

2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

H. Going Concern

1. Accounting policy a) General Principles to the council financial statements discloses all of the matters of which we are aware that are relevant to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, our plans for future action, and the feasibility of those plans.

I. Ownership of Assets

1. Except for assets capitalised under finance leases, the Council has satisfactory title to all assets appearing in the balance sheet, and there are no liens or encumbrances on the Council's assets, nor has any asset been pledged as collateral. All assets to which the Council has satisfactory title appear in the balance sheet.

2. All agreements and options to buy back assets previously sold have been properly recorded and adequately disclosed in the council financial statements.

J. Reserves

1. We have properly recorded or disclosed in the council financial statements the useable and unusable reserves.

K. Use of the Work of a Specialist

1. We agree with the findings of the specialists that we engaged to evaluate the asset valuations and net pension liability valuation and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the council financial statements and the underlying accounting records. We did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and we are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.

L. Asset Valuation Estimates

1. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 for the Council.

2. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the asset valuation estimates appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out planned uses of assets valued.

3. We confirm that the disclosures made in the council financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete and made in accordance with

CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 for the Council.

4. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the council financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

M. Retirement benefits

1. On the basis of the process established by us and having made appropriate enquiries, we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the scheme liabilities are consistent with our knowledge of the business. All significant retirement benefits and all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for.

Yours Faithfully,

Director of Finance

Chair of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.