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Enquiries to: Mr Stuart McGregor
Direct line:
Email: Stuart.McGregor@havant.gov.uk
My reference:
Your reference:
Date: 21st September 2016

Dear Andrew

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Havant Borough Council ("the Council") for the year ended 31 March 2016. 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 financial statements give a true and fair view of the Council financial position of Havant Borough Council as of 31 March 2016 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland), 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

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 2015/16.

1. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Council, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the 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 2015/16. We have approved the financial statements.

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2. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.
3. As members of management of the Council, we believe that the Council has 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 2015/16, that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
4. 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 financial statements taken as a whole.
 - Cashflow – Note 23 - We have not corrected these differences identified by and brought to the attention from the auditor because all of the material reconciling items between the Income & expenditure account and cashflow have already been identified in the note and does not add any value to the reader of the Accounts.
 - Collection Fund - The adjustment identified relates specifically to the Collection Fund (Council Tax and Business Rates that Havant Borough Council collects and distributes on behalf of all the major preceptors), and does not impact on the Council's General Fund. Of the £383,000 adjustment, 12.8% (£49,000) relates to HBC's Accounts; the remainder relates to Hampshire County Council (72.2%), Hampshire Fire and Rescue (4.2%) and Hampshire Police & Crime Commissioner (10.8%). Officers have discussed the correction with Hampshire County Council, who have determined that the adjustment is not material enough to warrant any adjustment to their Accounts. To ensure consistency, no adjustment has been made to the HBC Accounts.

B. Fraud

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
2. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
3. We have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud involving management or other employees who have a significant role in the Council's internal controls over financial reporting. In addition, we have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud involving other employees in which the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements. We have no knowledge of any allegations of financial improprieties, including fraud or suspected fraud, (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers") which could result in a misstatement of the financial statements or otherwise affect the financial reporting of the Council.

C. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

1. We have disclosed to you all identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

D. 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 are reflected in the financial statements.
3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Council and Governance and Audit committee held through the year to the most recent meeting on the following date: 29th June 2016.
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 period 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 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 financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.

E. 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 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, and have disclosed in the financial statements all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

F. Subsequent Events

1. Other than those described in Note 39 to the financial statements, there have been no events subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

G. Business rate appeal provision

1. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.
2. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the business rate appeal provision appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out business rate collection on behalf of the entity.
3. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate and disclosures in the financial statements due to subsequent events.

Yours faithfully,

Stuart McGregor, Head of Finance and Assets

Cllr Kenneth Smith, Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee

21st September 2016

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SCHEDULE – Explanation of uncorrected audit differences

The following differences have been identified during the course of the audit and have not been considered material by management or by Ernst & Young for adjustments.

Cash Flow statement

Disclosure	Description of difference
Note 23 – Net cash flow from operating activities	'Other non-cash movements' of £170,000 in note 23 to the financial statements has been used to balance the cash flow and is an unsupported balancing item only.

Collection fund

Disclosure	Description of difference
Collection Fund	The 'Contribution to Bad Debt Provision' was understated by £383,000 due to an error in the calculation. The Collection Fund 'Contribution to bad debt provision' was understated by £383,000 due to an error in the calculation. The Collection Fund is a memorandum account which records all transactions relating to Council Tax and Business Rates. The Council draws its share of Council Tax and Business Rates from the Fund. The Council's share of the contribution to the bad debt provision which would be reflected in the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance sheet is £49,000.