

Finance

HEAD OF SERVICE: **William Jacobs**



Listening Learning Leading

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Dear Maria

Despite great efforts by my accountancy team, we feel we will not be able to provide you with a revised 2007/08 statement of accounts and the relevant working papers by 12 September 2008. Therefore, I would like to request that you agree to providing a late opinion on the accounts.

As you are aware, our contractors carried out a major system conversion during 2007/08 and we have found the task of reconciling the old and the new systems to the general ledger, for the first time, to be more complicated than originally envisaged. Working with the contractors we believe that the discrepancy between the systems is in the order of £20,000, which is immaterial for the purposes of the statement of accounts. However, working through the reconciliations, and identifying the implications of this for the collection fund, together with identifying the knock on effect of the changes on the other statements, has proved time consuming to complete.

I face the choice of rushing this work and presenting you with the required documents by the 12 September, or requesting that you provide a late opinion. Despite the criticism we may face, I would like to request a late opinion as this will give my team time to prepare robust and accurate papers. I also feel rushing such detailed work would carry a significant risk of error, which may cause further problems which would still delay the opinion. We would face even greater criticism for this than we would for not seeking a late opinion now.

I would like to propose that we postpone the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee planned for 24 September 2008 until 12 November 2008. I attach a brief timetable which shows how the deadline for the despatch of papers for this committee can be achieved.

I should be grateful if you would confirm you are willing to provide a late opinion and are happy with my proposed revised timetable.

Kind regards

William Jacobs
Head of Finance and S151 officer