

**South Oxfordshire District Council**

Year ending 31 March 2013

**Annual Audit Letter**

October 2013



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The Members  
South Oxfordshire District Council  
Benson Lane  
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Oxfordshire  
OX10 8ED

23 October 2013

Dear Members,

## Annual Audit Letter

The purpose of this Annual Audit Letter is to communicate to the Members of South Oxfordshire District Council and external stakeholders, including members of the public, the key issues arising from our work, which we consider should be brought to their attention.

We have already reported the detailed findings from our audit work to those charged with governance of South Oxfordshire District Council in the following report:

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2012/13 Audit Results Report for South  
Oxfordshire District Council

Issued 12 September 2013 and presented to  
the Audit and Corporate Governance  
Committee on 26 September 2013

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The matters reported here are the most significant for the Authority.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the officers of South Oxfordshire District Council for their assistance during the course of our work.

Yours faithfully

Maria Grindley  
For and behalf of Ernst & Young LLP  
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In March 2010 the Audit Commission issued a revised version of the 'Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies' ('Statement of responsibilities'). It is available from the Chief Executive of each audited body and via the [Audit Commission's website](#).

The Statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the Audit Commission's appointed auditors and audited bodies. It summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies begin and end, and what is to be expected of the audited body in certain areas.

The Standing Guidance serves as our terms of appointment as auditors appointed by the Audit Commission. The Standing Guidance sets out additional requirements that auditors must comply with, over and above those set out in the Code of Audit Practice 2010 (the Code) and statute, and covers matters of practice and procedure which are of a recurring nature.

This Annual Audit Letter is prepared in the context of the Statement of responsibilities. It is addressed to the Members of the audited body, and is prepared for their sole use. We, as appointed auditor, take no responsibility to any third party.

**Our Complaints Procedure** - 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, you may take the issue up with your usual partner or director contact. 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. We can provide further information on how you may contact our professional institute.

# 1. Executive summary

Our 2012/13 audit work has been undertaken in accordance with the Audit Planning Report we issued on 11 March 2013 and is conducted in accordance with the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice, International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and other guidance issued by the Audit Commission.

The Authority is responsible for preparing and publishing its Statement of Accounts, accompanied by the Annual Governance Statement. In the Annual Governance Statement, the Authority reports publicly on an annual basis on the extent to which they comply with their own code of governance, including how they have monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes in the coming period. The Authority is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

As auditors we are responsible for:

- ▶ forming an opinion on the financial statements;
- ▶ reviewing the Annual Governance Statement;
- ▶ forming a conclusion on the arrangements that the Authority has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- ▶ undertaking any other work specified by the Audit Commission.

Summarised below are the conclusions from all elements of our work:

Audit the financial statements of South Oxfordshire District Council for the financial year ended 31 March 2013 in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland)	On 27 September 2013 we issued an unqualified audit opinion in respect of the Authority.
Form a conclusion on the arrangements the Authority has made for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.	On 27 September 2013 we issued an unqualified value for money conclusion.
Issue a report to those charged with governance of the Authority (the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee) communicating significant findings resulting from our audit.	On 12 September we issued our report in respect of the Authority.
Report to the National Audit Office on the accuracy of the consolidation pack the Authority is required to prepare for the Whole of Government Accounts.	We reported our findings to the National Audit Office on 26 September 2013.
Consider the completeness of disclosures in the Authority's Annual Governance Statement, identify any inconsistencies with the other information of which we are aware from our work and consider whether it complies with CIPFA / SOLACE guidance.	No issues to report.
Consider whether, in the public interest, we should make a report on any matter coming to our notice in the course of the	No issues to report.

audit.

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Determine whether any other action should be taken in relation to our responsibilities under the Audit Commission Act.

No issues to report.

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Issue a certificate that we have completed the audit in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Code of Practice issued by the Audit Commission.

On 27 September 2013 we issued our audit completion certificate.

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Issue a report to those charged with governance of the Authority summarising the certification (of grant claims and returns) work that we have undertaken.

We will issue our annual certification report to those charged with governance with respect to the 2012/13 financial year later in the year.

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## 2. Key findings

### 2.1 Financial statement audit

We audited the Authority's Statement of Accounts in line with the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice, International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and other guidance issued by the Audit Commission. We issued an unqualified audit report on 27 September 2013.

Our audit did not identify any material misstatements, and only a small number of presentation and disclosure amendments were required to the financial statements. This demonstrates the robustness of the Authority's closedown and review process for producing the draft financial statements.

The main issues identified as part of our audit of your financial statements, including our conclusions in relation to the areas of risk/areas of audit emphasis outlined in our Audit Plan, were set out for Members in our Audit Results Report. There are no significant issues we wish to raise for your attention in this letter.

### 2.2 Value for money conclusion

We are required to carry out sufficient work to conclude on whether the Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

In accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission, in 2012/13 our conclusion was based on two criteria:

- ▶ The organisation has proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience; and
- ▶ The organisation has proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

We issued an unqualified value for money conclusion on 27 September 2013. Our audit did not identify any significant matters.

### 2.3 Objections received

We received no objections to the 2012/13 accounts from members of the public.

### 2.4 Whole of government accounts

We reported to the National Audit office on 26 September 2013 the results of our work performed in relation to the accuracy of the consolidation pack the Authority is required to prepare for the whole of government accounts. We did not identify any areas of concern.

### 2.5 Annual governance statement

We are required to consider the completeness of disclosures in the Authority's Annual Governance Statement, identify any inconsistencies with the other information of which we are aware from our work, and consider whether it complies with CIPFA / SOLACE guidance. We completed this work and did not identify any areas of concern.

### 2.6 Certification of grants claims and returns

We will issue the Annual Certification Report for 2012/13 later in the year.

### **3. Control themes and observations**

As part of our audit of the financial statements, we obtained an understanding of internal control sufficient to plan our audit and determine the nature, timing and extent of testing performed. Although our audit was not designed to express an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control, we are required to communicate to you any significant deficiencies.

We have not identified any significant deficiencies in internal control.

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