

David Buckle  
South Oxfordshire District Council  
135 Eastern Avenue  
Milton Park  
Milton  
OX14 4SB

31 March 2016

Dear David

## **Annual Audit and Certification Fees 2016/17**

We are writing to confirm the audit and certification work that we propose to undertake for the 2016/17 financial year at South Oxfordshire District Council.

### **Indicative audit fee**

For the 2016/17 financial year, Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) has set the scale fee for each audited body, following consultation on its Work Programme and Scale of Fees.

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 South Oxfordshire District Council our indicative fee is set at the scale fee level. Certain assumptions form the basis for the indicative fee, 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;
- the operating effectiveness of the internal controls for the key processes identified within our audit strategy;
- placing reliance on the work of internal audit as planned;
- our accounts opinion and value for money conclusion being unqualified;
- appropriate quality of documentation is provided by the Council;
- there being an effective control environment; and
- prompt responses to our draft reports.

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

As we have not yet completed our audit for 2015/16, our audit planning process for 2016/17 will continue as the year progresses. We will review and update fees as necessary, within the parameters of our contract.

### **Certification fee**

The PSAA has set an indicative certification fee for housing benefit subsidy claim certification work for each audited benefits authority. The indicative fee is based on actual 2014/15 benefit certification fees, and incorporating a 25 per cent reduction.

The basis of the indicative certification fee is on the expectation that an audited body is able to provide the auditor with complete and materially accurate housing benefit subsidy claim with supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes.

The indicative certification fee for 2016/17 relates to work on the housing benefit subsidy claim for the year ended 31 March 2017. We have set the certification fee at the indicative fee level. We will update our risk assessment after we complete 2015/16 benefit certification work, and to reflect any further changes in the certification arrangements.

### **Summary of fees**

	Indicative fee 2016/17 £	Planned fee 2015/16 £	Actual fee 2014/15 £
Total Code audit fee	48,186	48,186	64,248
Certification of housing benefit subsidy claim	9,623	10,972	12,830

We will separately negotiate and agree fees for any additional work that we may agree to undertake (outside of the Code of Audit Practice).

### **Billing**

The indicative audit fee will be billed in 4 quarterly instalments of £14,452.

### **Audit plan**

We expect to issue our plan in February 2017. 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 Head of Finance and, if necessary, prepare a report outlining the reasons for the fee change for discussion with the Joint Audit and Governance Committee.

**Audit team**

The key members of the audit team for the 2016/17 financial year are:

Andrew Brittain  
**Executive Director**

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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. 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



Andrew Brittain  
Executive Director  
For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

cc. William Jacobs, Head of Finance  
Kevin Bulmer, Chair of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee