

Mike Dawson
Chief Executive
Tewkesbury Borough Council
Council Offices
Gloucester Road
Tewkesbury
GL20 5TT

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Grant Thornton UK LLP
Hartwell House
55-61 Victoria Street
Bristol BS1 6FT

T +44 (0)117 305 7600
F +44 (0)117 305 7784
DX 78112 Bristol
www.grant-thornton.co.uk

Dear Mike

Planned audit fee for 2014/15

The Audit Commission has set its work programme and proposed scales of fees for 2014/15. In this letter we set out details of the audit fee for the Council along with the scope and timing of our work and details of our team.

Scale fee

The Audit Commission defines the scale audit fee as “the fee required by auditors to carry out the work necessary to meet their statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. It represents the best estimate of the fee required to complete an audit where the audited body has no significant audit risks and it has in place a sound control environment that ensures the auditor is provided with complete and materially accurate financial statements with supporting working papers within agreed timeframes.”

The Council's scale fee for 2014/15 has been set by the Audit Commission at £58,995 which is the same as for 2013/14.

Further details of the work programme and individual scale fees for all audited bodies are set out on the Audit Commission's website at: www.audit-commission.gov.uk/audit-regime/audit-fees/proposed-work-programme-and-scales-of-fees-201415/proposed-individual-scale-fees-for-local-government-bodies/

The audit planning process for 2014/15, including the risk assessment, will continue as the year progresses and fees will be reviewed and updated as necessary as our work progresses.

Scope of the audit fee

The scale fee covers:

- our audit of your financial statements
- our work to reach a conclusion on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources (the value for money conclusion)
- our work on your whole of government accounts return.

Value for Money conclusion

Under the Audit Commission Act, we must be satisfied that the Council has adequate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, focusing on the arrangements for:

- securing financial resilience; and
- prioritising resources within tighter budgets.

We undertake a risk assessment to identify any significant risks which we will need to address before reaching our value for money conclusion. We will assess the Council's financial resilience as part of our work on the VfM conclusion and a separate report of our findings will be provided.

Certification of grant claims and returns

The only 2014/15 claim for which the Audit Commission currently intends issuing an instruction to its appointed auditors to certify is the Housing Benefit Claim.

The Council's composite indicative grant certification scale fee for 2014/15 has been set by the Audit Commission at £12,700.

Billing schedule

Fees will be billed as follows:

Main Audit fee	£
September 2014	14,748.75
December 2014	14,748.75
March 2015	14,748.75
June 2015	14,748.75
Grant Certification	
December 2015	12,700
Total	71,695

Outline audit timetable

We will undertake our audit planning and interim audit procedures in the period December 2014 to March 2015. Upon completion of this phase of our work we will issue a detailed audit plan setting out our findings and details of our audit approach. Our final accounts audit and work on the VfM conclusion will be completed in the period July to September 2015 and work on the whole of government accounts return in September 2015.

Phase of work	Timing	Outputs	Comments
Audit planning and interim audit	December 2014 to March 2015	Audit plan	The plan summarises the findings of our audit planning and our approach to the audit of the Council's accounts and VfM.
Final accounts audit	July to August 2015	Audit Findings (Report to those charged with governance)	This report sets out the findings of our accounts audit and VfM work for the consideration of those charged with governance.
VfM conclusion	Jan to Sept 2015	Audit Findings (Report to those charged with governance)	As above
Whole of government accounts	Sept 2015	Opinion on the WGA return	This work will be completed alongside the accounts audit.
Annual audit letter	October 2015	Annual audit letter to the Council	The letter will summarise the findings of all aspects of our work.
Grant certification	June to November 2015	Grant certification report	A report summarising the findings of our grant certification work

Our team

The key members of the audit team for 2014/15 are:

	Name	Phone Number	E-mail
Engagement Lead	Alex Walling	0117 305 7804 07780 456142	alex.j.walling@uk.gt.com
Engagement Manager	Peter Smith	0117 305 7832 07780 456140	Peter.w.smith@uk.gt.com

Additional work

The scale fee excludes any work requested by the Council that we may agree to undertake outside of our Code audit. Each additional piece of work will be separately agreed and a detailed project specification and fee agreed with the Council.

Quality assurance

We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If you are in any way dissatisfied, or would like to discuss how we can improve our service, please contact me in the first instance. Alternatively you may wish to contact John Golding, our Public Sector Assurance regional lead partner at john.golding@uk.gt.com.

Yours sincerely



Alex Walling
Associate Director and Engagement Lead
For Grant Thornton UK LLP

cc Simon Dix (Group Manager – Finance & Asset Management)