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Ged Curran
Chief Executive
Merton London Borough Council
Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
Surrey SM4 5DX

29 April 2014

Ref: Merton Council 2014-15 fee ltr
Your ref:

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Dear Ged

Annual Audit and Certification Fees 2014/15

We are writing to confirm the audit and certification work that we propose to undertake for the 2014/15 financial year at Merton London Borough Council. The fee reflects the risk-based approach to audit planning set out in the Code of Audit Practice and the work mandated by the Audit Commission for 2014/15.

Indicative Audit Fee

The audit fee covers the:

- ▶ Audit of the financial statements;
- ▶ Value for money conclusion; and
- ▶ Whole of Government accounts

For the 2014/15 financial year the Audit Commission has set the scale fee for each audited body as part of the recent 5 year procurement exercise and consequently it is not liable to increase in that period without a change in scope.

The 2014/15 scale fee is based on certain assumptions, 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;
- ▶ We are able to place reliance on the work of internal audit to the maximum extent possible under auditing standards;
- ▶ The financial statements will be available to us in line with the agreed timetable;
- ▶ Working papers and records provided to us in support of the financial statements are of a good quality and are provided in line with our agreed timetable; and
- ▶ Prompt responses are provided to our draft reports.

Meeting these assumptions will help ensure the delivery of our audit at the indicative audit fee.

The indicative audit fee set out in the table below has initially been set at the scale fee level as the overall level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements is not significantly different from that of the prior year.

As we have not yet completed our audit for 2012/13, our audit planning process for 2014/15 will continue as the year progresses. Fees will be reviewed and updated as necessary, within the parameters of our contract with the Audit Commission.

Certification fee

The Audit Commission has set an indicative certification fee for each audited body. The indicative fee is based on the 2012/13 actual certification fees available adjusted to reflect any known schemes that no longer require auditor certification. The Audit Commission has revised the previously published 2013/14 indicative certification fee to reflect further schemes that no longer require auditor certification.

The composite indicative fee is based on the expectation that an audited body is able to provide the auditor with complete and materially accurate claims and returns, with supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes.

The indicative certification fee for 2014/15 relates to work on grant claims and returns for the year ended 31 March 2015. We have set the certification fee at the composite indicative fee level. We will update our risk assessment after we complete 2013/14 certification work, and to reflect further changes in the Audit Commission's certification arrangements.

Summary of Fees

	Indicative fee 2014/15 £	Planned fee 2013/14 £	Actual fee 2012/13 £
Total Code audit fee	188,730	188,730 (**)	188,730 (*)
Certification of claims and returns	37,760	46,989	50,721
Total	226,490	235,719 (**)	239,451 (*)

(*) - We are awaiting a determination from the Audit Commission on a scale fee variation for work carried out in responding to questions from a local elector, so this figure may change.

(**) - This does not include a potential scale fee variation in respect of work carried out in respect of appointment of consultants and interim staff in response to whistleblowing allegations, the results of which were reported to the General Purposes Committee in March 2014. This variation is currently being considered by the Audit Commission

Any additional work that we may agree to undertake (outside of the Audit Code of Practice) will be separately negotiated and agreed with you in advance.

Billing

The indicative audit fee will be billed in four quarterly instalments of £56,622.50 beginning in July 2014.

Audit Plan

Our plan for the audit of the financial statements is expected to be issued in March 2015. This will detail the significant financial statement risks identified, planned audit procedures to respond to those risks, and any changes in fee. It will also set out the 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 Director of Corporate Services and, if necessary, prepare a report outlining the reasons for the fee change for discussion with the General Purposes Committee.

Audit team

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

David Wilkinson
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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



Paul King
Director

For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP
United Kingdom

cc. Caroline Holland Director of Corporate Services
Councillor Peter McCabe Chair of the General Purposes Committee