

Neil Bellamy,
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Our Ref: GH/
Your Ref:
Contact: Mr Glenn Hammons
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Date: 9 September 2014

Dear Mr Bellamy

Letter of Representation

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Northampton Borough Council ("the Authority"), for the year ended 31 March 2014, for the purpose of expressing an opinion:

- As to whether these financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2014 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- Whether the financial statement has been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14.

These financial statements comprise the Authority Movement in Reserves Statement, the Authority Comprehensive income and Expenditure Statement, the Authority Balance Sheet and the Authority Cash Flow Statement and the Collection Fund and related notes.

The Authority confirms that the representations it makes in this letter are in accordance with the definitions set out in the Appendix to this letter.

The Authority confirms that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as it considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing itself:

Financial Statements

1. The Authority has fulfilled its responsibilities, as set out in regulation 8 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, for the preparation of financial statements that:
 - Give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2014 and of the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
 - Have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the united Kingdom 2013/14.

- The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.
2. Measurement methods and significant assumptions used by the Authority in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
 3. All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14 require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Information Provided

4. The authority has provided you with:
 - Access to all information of which it is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements, such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - Additional information that you have requested from the authority for the purpose of the audit; and
 - Unrestricted access to persons within the Authority from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
5. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
6. The Authority acknowledges its responsibility for such internal control as it determines necessary for the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In particular, the authority acknowledges its responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

The Authority has disclosed to you the results of its assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

7. The Authority has disclosed to you all information in relation to:
 - a. Fraud or suspected fraud that it is aware of and that affects the Authority and involves:
 - Management;
 - Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - Others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements; and
 - b. Allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.
8. The Authority has disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

9. The Authority has disclosed to you and has appropriately accounted for and/or disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14 all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.
10. The Authority has disclosed to you the identity of the Authority's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which it is aware and all related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14.

Included in the appendix to this letter are the definitions of both a related party and a related party transaction as the Authority understands them and as defined in IAS 24, except where interpretations or adaptations to fit the public sector are detailed in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14.

11. On the basis of the process established by the Authority and having made appropriate enquiries, the Authority is satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme liabilities are consistent with its knowledge of the business.

The Authority confirms that:

- a. All significant retirement benefits, including any arrangements that:

- Are statutory, contractual or implicit in the employer's actions;
- Arise in the UK and the Republic of Ireland or overseas;
- Are funded or unfunded; and
- Are approved or unapproved,

Have been identified and properly accounted for; and

- b. All settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for.

This letter was tabled and agreed as the meeting of the Audit Committee on 9 September 2014.

Yours faithfully

Councillor Phil Larratt
Chair of the Audit Committee

Glenn Hammons
Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer)

Appendix A to the Management Representation Letter of Northampton Borough Council

Financial Statements

A complete set of financial statements comprises:

- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the period
- Balance Sheet as at the end of the period
- Movement in Reserves Statement for the period
- Cash Flow Statement for the period
- Notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and
- Balance Sheet as at the beginning of the earliest comparative period (ie a third Balance Sheet) when an authority applies an accounting policy retrospectively or makes a retrospective restatement of items in its financial statements, or when it reclassifies items in its financial statements.

A local authority is required to present group accounts in addition to its single entity accounts where required by chapter 9 of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14.

A housing authority must present:

- A HRA income and Expenditure Statement; and
- A Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement.

A billing authority must present a Collection Fund Statement for the period showing amounts required by statute to be debited and credited to the Collection Fund.

The financial statements of a defined benefits pension fund and of police authorities and fire and rescue services in England and Wales must contain:

- A fund account disclosing changes in net assets available for benefits.
- A net assets statement showing the assets available for benefits at the year end
- Notes to the accounts.

Material Matters

Certain representations in this letter are described as being limited to matters that are material.

IAS1.7 and IAS 8.5 state the following:

Material omissions or misstatements of items are material if they could, individually or collectively, influence the economic decisions that the users make on the basis of the financial statements. Materiality depends on the size and nature of the omission or misstatement judged in the surrounding circumstances. The size or nature of the item, or a combination of both, could be the determining factor.

Fraud

Fraudulent financial reporting involves intentional misstatements including omissions of amounts or disclosures in financial statements to deceive financial statement users.

Misappropriation of assets involves the theft of an entity's assets. It is often accompanied by false or misleading records or documents in order to conceal the fact that assets are missing or have been pledged without proper authorisation.

Error

An error is an unintentional misstatement in financial statement, including the omission of an amount or a disclosure.

Prior period errors are omissions from, and misstatements in, the entity's financial statements for one or more prior periods arising from a failure to use, or misuse of, reliable information that:

- Was available when financial statements for those periods were authorised for issue, and
- Could reasonably be expected to have been obtained and taken into account in the preparation and presentation of those financial statements.

Such errors include the effects of mathematical mistakes, mistakes in applying accounting policies, oversights or misinterpretations of facts, and fraud.

Management

For the purposes of this letter, references to "management" should be read as "management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance".

Related Parties

Parties are considered to be related if one party has the ability to control the other party or exercise significant influence over the other party in making financial and operating decisions or if the related party entity and another entity are subject to common control.

Related parties include:

- Entities that directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, control or are controlled by the authority (i.e. subsidiaries);
- Associates;
- Joint ventures in which the authority is a venture
- An entity that has an interest in the authority that gives it significant influence over the authority;
- Key management personnel, and close members of the family of key management personnel; and
- Post-employment benefit plan (pension fund) for the benefit of employees of the authority, or of any entity that is a related party of the authority.

Key management personnel are all chief officers (or equivalent), elected members, chief executive of the authority, and other persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the authority, including the oversight of these activities.

The following are deemed not to be related parties by the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14:

- Providers of finance in the course of their business in that regard and trade unions in the course of their normal dealings with an authority by virtue of those dealings; and
- An entity with which the relationship is solely that of agency.

Related party transaction

A related party transaction is a transfer of resources or obligations between related parties, regardless of whether a price is charged. Related party transactions exclude transactions with any other entity that is a related party solely because of its economic dependence on the authority or the government of which it forms part.

Glenn Hammons
Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer)