

The Audit Findings for Hertsmere Borough Council

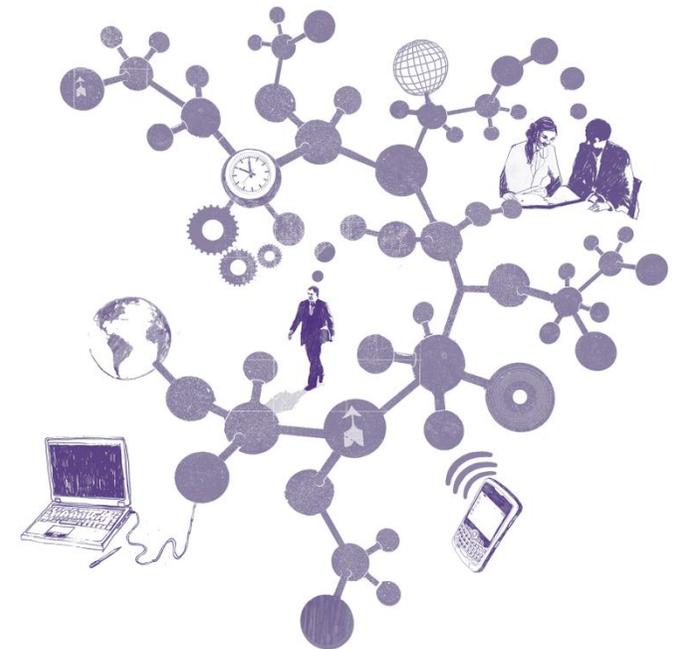
Year ended 31 March 2013

September 2013

Phil Westerman
Engagement Lead
T 020 7728 2548
E philip.r.westerman@uk.gt.com

Trevor Greenlee
Manager
T 01293 554071
E trevor.greenlee@uk.gt.com

Rajiv Bissessur
Executive
T 020 7728 2458
E rajiv.bissessur@uk.gt.com



The contents of this report relate only to those matters which came to our attention during the conduct of our normal audit procedures which are designed primarily for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements. Our audit is not designed to test all internal controls or identify all areas of control weakness. However, where, as part of our testing, we identify any control weaknesses, we will report these to you. In consequence, our work cannot be relied upon to disclose defalcations or other irregularities, or to include all possible improvements in internal control that a more extensive special examination might identify.

We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

Contents

Section	Page
1. Executive summary	4
2. Audit findings	7
3. Value for Money	17
4. Fees, non audit services and independence	20
5. Communication of audit matters	22
Appendices	
A Audit opinion	

Section 1: Executive summary

01. Executive summary

02. Audit findings

03. Value for Money

04. Fees, non audit services and independence

05. Communication of audit matters

Executive summary

Purpose of this report

This report highlights the key matters arising from our audit of Hertsmere Borough Council's (the Council) financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013. It is also used to report our audit findings to management and those charged with governance in accordance with the requirements of International Standard on Auditing 260 (ISA).

Under the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice we are required to report whether, in our opinion, the Council's financial statements present a true and fair view of the financial position, its expenditure and income for the year and whether they have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. We are also required to reach a formal conclusion on whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (the Value for Money conclusion).

Introduction

In the conduct of our audit we have not had to alter or change our planned audit approach, which we communicated in our Audit Plan dated June 2013.

Our audit is substantially complete, subject to completion of work in the following areas:

- testing of the Council's 2012/13 Housing and Council Tax Benefit subsidy claim. Our audit approach requires testing under the certification framework agreed between the Audit Commission and the Department of Work and Pensions to be substantially complete prior to giving our opinion on the Council's accounts.

- obtaining and reviewing letters from third parties to confirm a number of call deposit and investment balances at 31 March 2013
- obtaining and reviewing the final management letter of representation
- review of the final version of the financial statements and the Annual Governance Statement
- updating our post balance sheet events review to the date of signing our audit opinion
- work on the Whole of Government Accounts.

We received draft financial statements and accompanying working papers at the start of our audit in accordance with the timetable agreed with officers. As in previous years the financial statements have been produced to a high standard. Only a small number of audit amendments were required.

Key issues arising from our audit

Financial statements opinion

We anticipate providing an unqualified opinion on the financial statements.

We identified only one error on the primary financial statements above the level where we ask management to adjust the accounts. Management decided not to adjust for this error as the amount was not material. Further details are included at Section 2 of this report.

We also identified a small number of classification and other issues requiring amendment to disclosure notes. These adjustments were all agreed by management. A number of minor changes to the Annual Governance

Statement were also agreed.

Further details of our findings are set out in section 2 of this report.

Value for money conclusion

We are pleased to report that based on our review of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources we propose to give an unqualified VFM conclusion.

Further detail of our work on Value for Money is set out in section 3 of this report.

Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

We will complete our work in respect of the Whole of Government Accounts in accordance with the national timetable.

Controls

The Council's management is responsible for the identification, assessment, management and monitoring of risk, and for developing, operating and monitoring the system of internal control.

Our audit is not designed to test all internal controls or identify all areas of control weakness. However, where we identify any control weaknesses as part of our testing we report these to the Council.

Our work has not identified any control weaknesses which we wish to highlight for your attention.

Further details are provided within section 2 of this report.

The way forward

Matters arising from the financial statements audit and review of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources have been discussed with the Director of Resources.

Acknowledgment

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance provided by the finance team and other staff during our audit.

Grant Thornton UK LLP
September 2013

Section 2: Audit findings

01. Executive summary

02. Audit findings

03. Value for Money

04. Fees, non audit services and independence

05. Communication of audit matters

Audit findings

In this section we present our findings in respect of matters and risks identified at the planning stage of the audit and additional matters that arose during the course of our work. We set out on the following pages the work we have performed and findings arising from our work in respect of the audit risks we identified in our audit plan dated June 2013. We also set out the adjustments to the financial statements from our audit work and our findings in respect of internal controls.

Changes to Audit Plan

We have not made any changes to our Audit Plan as previously communicated in June 2013.

Audit opinion

We anticipate that we will provide the Council with an unqualified opinion. Our audit opinion is set out in Appendix A.

Audit findings against significant risks

"Significant risks often relate to significant non-routine transactions and judgmental matters. Non-routine transactions are transactions that are unusual, either due to size or nature, and that therefore occur infrequently. Judgmental matters may include the development of accounting estimates for which there is significant measurement uncertainty" (ISA 315).

In this section we detail our response to the significant risks of material misstatement which we identified in the Audit Plan. As we noted in our plan, there are two presumed significant risks which are applicable to all audits under auditing standards.

	Risks identified in our audit plan	Work completed	Assurance gained and issues arising
1.	<p>Improper revenue recognition</p> <p>Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to improper recognition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and testing of revenue recognition policies • Testing of material revenue streams 	<p>Our audit work has not identified any issues in respect of revenue recognition.</p>
2.	<p>Management override of controls</p> <p>Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk of management over-ride of controls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accounting estimates, judgements and decisions made by management • Testing of journal entries 	<p>Our audit work has not identified any evidence of management override of controls. In particular our review of journal controls and testing of journal entries has not identified any significant issues.</p> <p>We set out later in this section of the report our work and findings on key accounting estimates and judgments.</p>

Audit findings against other risks

In this section we detail our response to the other risks of material misstatement which we identified in the Audit Plan.

Transaction cycle	Description of risk	Work completed	Assurance gained & issues arising
Operating expenses	Creditors understated or not recorded in the correct period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of our understanding of processes and key controls over the transaction cycle • Walkthrough of the key controls to assess whether those controls are designed effectively • Substantive testing of creditor balances to supporting documentation • Testing of new year payments to ensure expenditure had been posted to the correct accounting period 	We gained sufficient assurance to conclude that creditors were not materially misstated.
Employee remuneration	Employee remuneration accruals understated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of our understanding of processes and key controls over the transaction cycle • Walkthrough of the key controls to assess whether those controls are designed effectively • Substantive testing of payroll costs for a sample of employees to supporting documentation • Agreed gross pay and employer NIC costs to period end HM Revenue & Customs returns 	We gained sufficient assurance to conclude that employee remuneration expenses were not materially misstated.
Welfare expenditure	Welfare benefits improperly computed	<p>(Work still in progress)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete required work under the Audit Commission grant claim certification framework including review of a sample of benefit claims to ensure amounts have been correctly calculated. • Review reconciliation of welfare expenditure in the financial statements to the benefit subsidy claim. 	There are no issues identified from the work completed to date which we need to bring to your attention.

Accounting policies, estimates & judgements

In this section we report on our consideration of accounting policies, in particular revenue recognition policies, and key estimates and judgements made and included with the Council's financial statements.

Accounting area	Summary of policy	Comments	Assessment
Revenue recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue recognition policies are set out at Note 1 to the accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue recognition policies are adequately disclosed in the financial statements. In our audit we did not identify any areas of non compliance with the revenue recognition policy, nor did we identify any areas of significant judgement in the application of the policy. 	 Green
Judgements and estimates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key estimates and judgements include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – useful life of capital equipment – pension fund valuations – revaluations – impairments – provisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council sets out its policies on judgements and estimates in notes 1 and 3 to the accounts. We reviewed these policies and concluded they were reasonable and consistent with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. We did not identify any instances of non compliance with those policies. 	 Green
Other accounting policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have reviewed the Council's policies against the requirements of the CIPFA Code and accounting standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our review of accounting policies has not highlighted any issues which we need to bring to your attention. 	 Green

Assessment

-  Marginal accounting policy which could potentially attract attention from regulators
-  Accounting policy appropriate and disclosures sufficient

-  Accounting policy appropriate but scope for improved disclosure

Adjusted misstatements

Following the audit a number of minor adjustments have been actioned by management and reflected in the amended accounts presented for members approval. None of these audit adjustments are above the level we are required to report to those charged with governance, other than for the disclosure issues noted on the following page.

Misclassifications & disclosure changes

The table below provides details of misclassification and disclosure adjustments identified during the audit above the level we are required to report. We also agreed a number of other minor changes and narrative amendments to improve the presentation in the accounts. All adjustments have been actioned in the final version of the financial statements.

Adjustment type	Value £'000	Account balance	Impact on the financial statements
1 Misclassification	883	Note 16: Amounts Reported for Resource Allocation Decisions	Analysis between lines "Other service recharges" and "Support service recharges" in service analysis table did not agree to amounts in the service analysis column of the subjective analysis table.
2 Disclosure	864	Note 18: Capital Financing Statement	Due to a spread sheet error the total for "Remaining Budget on Commitments" was stated to be £3,060,000 but should have been £3,924,000.
3 Misclassification	441	Note 25: Debtors Note 31: Financial Instruments	Note 25: "Financial assets" were overstated by £441,000 and "Non-financial assets and statutory debts" understated by the same amount as some amounts had been incorrectly classified. There are matching adjustments at Note 31.
4 Misclassification	684	Note 28: Creditors Note 31: Financial Instruments	Note 28: "Financial liabilities" were overstated by £684,000 and "Non-financial liabilities and statutory debts" understated by the same amount as some amounts had been incorrectly classified. There are matching adjustments at Note 31.

Unadjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of errors identified above the level which we are required to report to management but where management have decided not to amend the financial statements. The Audit Committee is required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below:

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account £'000	Balance Sheet £'000	Reason for not adjusting
1 Balance for Property, Plant and Equipment (£93,706,000) overstated by £156,000 due to errors in calculating amounts for two assets revalued at 31 March 2013.	-		Management have decided not to adjust the financial statements as the amount is not material.
Non- Current Assets overstated by £156,000		(156)	
Unusable reserves overstated by £156,000		156	
Overall impact	-	-	

Internal controls

- The purpose of an audit is to express an opinion on the financial statements.
- Our audit included consideration of internal control relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.
- Within the scope of our work we did not identify any significant issues to report to you.
- Our review of the Council's information technology control environment did not identify any weaknesses likely to give rise to a material misstatement in the accounts. However, we made a number of recommendations to improve controls which we reported in our June 2013 Audit Plan. We understand progress against these recommendations will continue to be monitored through the officer update report received by each Audit Committee.

Other communication requirements

We set out below details of other matters which we are required by auditing standards to communicate to those charged with governance.

	Issue	Commentary
1.	Matters in relation to fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have discussed the risk of fraud and have been made aware of investigations and prosecutions during the year. We have not identified any other issues during the course of our audit procedures.
2.	Matters in relation to laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not aware of any significant incidences of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
3.	Written representations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A standard letter of representation has been requested from the Council.
4.	Disclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disclosure issues requiring amendment have been disclosed at "Misclassifications and disclosure changes".
5.	Matters in relation to related parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not aware of any related party transactions which have not been disclosed.
6.	Going concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our work has not identified any reason to challenge the Council's decision to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Section 3: Value for Money

01. Executive summary

02. Audit findings

03. Value for Money

04. Fees, non audit services and independence

05. Communication of audit matters

Value for Money

Value for Money conclusion

The Code of Audit Practice 2010 (the Code) describes the Council's responsibilities to put in place proper arrangements to:

- secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources
- ensure proper stewardship and governance
- review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

We are required to give our VFM conclusion based on the following two criteria specified by the Audit Commission which support our reporting responsibilities under the Code.

- **The Council has proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience.** The Council has robust systems and processes to manage effectively financial risks and opportunities, and to secure a stable financial position that enables it to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.
- **The Council has proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.** The Council is prioritising its resources within tighter budgets, for example by achieving cost reductions and by improving efficiency and productivity.

Key findings

Securing financial resilience

We have reviewed the Council's arrangements against the following three expected characteristics of proper arrangements as defined by the Audit Commission:

- Financial governance;
- Financial planning; and
- Financial control

Financial governance

The Council has a strong corporate focus on effective financial management. Financial management responsibilities are clearly defined and the processes for monitoring budgets and reporting on the in-year financial position are well-established. There is appropriate oversight by members.

Financial Planning

The Council has an established medium term planning framework. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was not updated for 2012/13 due to perceived uncertainty around future changes to the framework for government funding, but has been comprehensively updated at July 2013. The revised MTFS covers a five year period to 31 March 2018. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the Council's financial position and the potential risks over the lifetime of the plan. The assumptions supporting the MTFS are comprehensive and supported by "most likely" scenario planning.

The Council has a history of delivering operational surpluses on revenue expenditure. It achieved a surplus of £104,000 in 2012/13.

Value for Money

There has been no use of general reserves to support the revenue budget in recent years, including 2012/13, and the MTFS does not envisage the use of general reserves to support revenue expenditure over the lifetime of the plan. In 2011/12 the Council's ratio of usable reserves to gross revenue expenditure was 47%, placing it 4th out of 16 in the Audit Commission "nearest neighbours" group. For 2012/13 the ratio is virtually unchanged at 46%.

Information on major contracts is used to inform financial planning. The Council's largest contract is with Hertsmere Leisure Trust, a 10- year contract commencing on 1 February 2012. However, as at September 2013 this contract remains unsigned, with discussions between the Trust and the Council continuing on a range of issues. This contract needs to be finalised to provide greater certainty for the Council's financial planning.

The MTFS identifies that the Council will need to achieve additional savings of £1,320,000 in the period 2014/15 to 2017/18 . This emphasises that the Council faces continuing financial pressures. Uncertainties also remain over future levels of government funding and the wider economic outlook. However, the Council's financial management processes continue to appear robust, providing an effective framework to address any potential funding gap and deliver its financial objectives.

Financial control

The Council has well-established processes for in-year financial monitoring. There is regular and detailed reporting to members with variances between budgeted and actual expenditure analysed and explained at a low level. For 2012/13 there was substantial consistency between in-year financial forecasting and final outcomes.

The required indicators under the Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code are set annually and the outturn is formally reported to Council. There is active review of treasury management policy. Identification of key organisational risks is transparent with risk registers regularly updated and formally reported to management and the Audit Committee.

Challenging economy, efficiency and effectiveness

We have reviewed whether the Council has prioritised its resources to take account of the tighter constraints within the current economic and funding environment.

The Council has a strong record of achieving savings and reviewing how services are delivered. An organisational review following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review has now resulted in savings of £1.9m, including budgeted savings for 2013/14 , and has led to a reduction of 15% of the Council's workforce. A budget options exercise with the participation of local residents continues to be carried out on a three year cycle, with the most recent exercise completed in July 2013.

There is an established in-year monitoring framework covering a range of financial and non-financial performance indicators. The information provided appears sufficient to allow effective decision-making.

Value for Money

Overall VFM conclusion

On the basis of our work, and having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria published by the Audit Commission, we are satisfied that in all significant respects the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2013.

Section 4: Fees, non audit services and independence

01. Executive summary

02. Audit findings

03. Value for Money

04. Fees, non audit services and independence

05. Communication of audit matters

Fees, non audit services and independence

We confirm below our final fees charged for the audit subject to completion of our work on grant claim certification. Our certification work is on-going and the final fee will be reported to the Audit Committee in our annual certification report.

Fees

	Per Audit plan £	Actual fees £
Council audit	64,921	64,921
Grant certification (estimated)	13,900	13,900
Total audit fees	78,821	78,821

Independence and ethics

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention. We have complied with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards and therefore we confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards.

Section 5: Communication of audit matters

01. Executive summary

02. Audit findings

03. Value for Money

04. Fees, non audit services and independence

05. Communication of audit matters

Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance

International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 260, as well as other ISAs, prescribe matters which we are required to communicate with those charged with governance, and which we set out in the table opposite.

The Audit Plan outlined our audit strategy and plan to deliver the audit, while this Audit Findings report presents the key issues and other matters arising from the audit, together with an explanation as to how these have been resolved.

Respective responsibilities

The Audit Findings Report has been prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission (www.audit-commission.gov.uk).

We have been appointed as the Council's independent external auditors by the Audit Commission, the body responsible for appointing external auditors to local public bodies in England. As external auditors, we have a broad remit covering finance and governance matters.

Our annual work programme is set in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code') issued by the Audit Commission and includes nationally prescribed and locally determined work. Our work considers the Council's key risks when reaching our conclusions under the Code.

It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. We have considered how the Council is fulfilling these responsibilities.

Our communication plan	Audit Plan	Audit Findings
Respective responsibilities of auditor and management/those charged with governance	✓	
Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit. Form, timing and expected general content of communications	✓	
Views about the qualitative aspects of the entity's accounting and financial reporting practices, significant matters and issues arising during the audit and written representations that have been sought		✓
Confirmation of independence and objectivity	✓	✓
A statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, relationships and other matters which might be thought to bear on independence. Details of non-audit work performed by Grant Thornton UK LLP and network firms, together with fees charged Details of safeguards applied to threats to independence	✓	✓
Material weaknesses in internal control identified during the audit		✓
Identification or suspicion of fraud involving management and/or others which results in material misstatement of the financial statements		✓
Compliance with laws and regulations		✓
Expected auditor's report		✓
Uncorrected misstatements		✓
Significant matters arising in connection with related parties		✓
Significant matters in relation to going concern		✓

Appendices

Appendix A: Audit opinion

We anticipate we will provide the Council with an unqualified audit report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Opinion on the Authority financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Hertsmere Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2013 under the Audit Commission Act 1998. The financial statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and the Collection Fund and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2012/13.

This report is made solely to the members of Hertsmere Borough Council in accordance with Part II of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 48 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by the Audit Commission in March 2010. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the Authority's Members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Director of Resources and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Director of Resource's Responsibilities, the Director of Resources is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Authority's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Director of Resources and the overall

presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the explanatory foreword to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Hertsmere Borough Council as at 31 March 2013 and of its 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 2012/13.

Opinion on other matters

In our opinion, the information given in the explanatory foreword for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- in our opinion the annual governance statement does not reflect compliance with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: a Framework' published by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007;
- we issue a report in the public interest under section 8 of the Audit Commission Act 1998;
- we designate under section 11 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 any recommendation as one that requires the Authority to consider it at a public meeting and to decide what action to take in response; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under the Audit Commission Act 1998.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

Respective responsibilities of the Authority and the auditor

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly

the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

We are required under Section 5 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements, having regard to relevant criteria specified by the Audit Commission.

We report if significant matters have come to our attention which prevent us from concluding that the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We have undertaken our audit in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria, published by the Audit Commission in November 2012, as to whether the Authority has proper arrangements for:

- securing financial resilience; and
- challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Audit Commission has determined these two criteria as those necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2013.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, the Authority had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Conclusion

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria published by the Audit Commission in November 2012, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, Hertsmere Borough Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2013.

Certificate

We certify that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of Hertsmere Borough Council in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission.

Philip R Westerman
Partner
for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Appointed Auditor

Grant Thornton House
Melton Street
Euston Square
London
NW1 2EP

xx September 2013



© 2013 Grant Thornton UK LLP. All rights reserved.

'Grant Thornton' means Grant Thornton UK LLP, a limited liability partnership.

Grant Thornton is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (Grant Thornton International). References to 'Grant Thornton' are to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms operate and refer to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton International and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. Services are delivered independently by member firms, which are not responsible for the services or activities of one another. Grant Thornton International does not provide services to clients.

grant-thornton.co.uk