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Dear Lee

Certification work for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council for year ended 31 March 2014

As you are aware, we are required to certify certain claims and returns submitted by the Council. Certification arrangements are prescribed by the Audit Commission, which agrees the scope of the work with each relevant government department or agency, and issues auditors with a Certification Instruction (CI) for each specific claim or return. The Audit Commission arrangements require us to report the outcome of certification work.

We certified one claim for the financial year 2013/14 relating to expenditure of £34.9 million (appendix A.)

We found the Council had put in place adequate arrangements to compile and complete, accurate and timely claims for audit certification. However, we did identify some errors from our testing of the Housing benefit subsidy claim in respect of non HRA Rent Rebates which resulted in minor amendments to the claim (appendix A).

The indicative fee set by the Audit Commission for 2013/14 is based on the final 2011/12 certification fees, reflecting the amount of work required by the auditor to certify the claims and returns in that year. Fees for schemes no longer requiring certification (such as the national non-domestic rates return) have been removed. The fees for certification of housing benefit subsidy claims have been reduced by 12 per cent, to reflect the removal of council tax benefit from the scheme. The indicative scale fee set by the Audit Commission for the Council for 2013/14 is £16,192. We are not proposing to make any changes to the indicative scale fee (appendix B).

Yours sincerely

For Grant Thornton UK LLP

Appendix A - Details of claims and returns certified for 2013/14

Claim or return	Value	Amended?	Amendment (£)	Qualified?	Comments
Housing benefits subsidy claim	£34,895,220	Yes	£36 from Cell 014 to Cell 012	No	Amendment in respect of misclassification of: Accommodation type
Housing benefits subsidy claim	£34,895,220	Yes	£4,801 from Cell 028 to Cell 027	No	Amendment in respect of misclassification of: Non-HRA Overpayments (Current Year)
Housing benefits subsidy claim	£34,895,220	Yes	£163 from Cell 033 to Cell 032	No	Amendment in respect of misclassification of: Non-HRA Overpayments (Prior Year)

Summary of errors and agreed amendments

Housing Benefits – Error Details	Action Taken	Evaluation
<p>Non HRA Rent Rebates:</p> <p>Two types of errors were identified from 11 cases within our initial sample of 20 cases:</p> <p>i) The first error was due to a failure to identify the correct type of temporary accommodation and the applicable LHA rate and the subsequent calculation of the LHA Cap. The assessor incorrectly identified the type of accommodation as self-contained rather than not self-contained</p> <p>ii) The second type of error related to the misclassification of Non-HRA Overpayments where claimants had vacated temporary accommodation without notifying the Authority. A total of 10 cases were identified whereby the Authority had classified these overpayments as Claimant (eligible) Error rather than Technical Overpayments which do not attract any subsidy</p>	<p>An additional review was carried out of all temporary accommodation claims within Cell 014 (Self Contained Accommodation) to ensure the accommodation type was correctly classified</p> <p>ii) The Authority undertook additional work to review all overpayments contained within Cell 028 (Current Year) and Cell 033 (Prior Year). The additional work was reviewed and agreed with the Authority</p>	<p>No further mis-classification was identified. The claim was amended to correct the error as follows:</p> <p>Reduce cell 014 by £36.00 Increase cell 012 by £36.00</p> <p>ii) The review indicated that the majority of the overpayments within Cells 028 and 033 had been classified incorrectly resulting in the following adjustment to the claim:</p> <p>Reduce Cell 028 by £4,801 Increase Cell 027 by £4,801 Reduce Cell 033 by £163 Increase Cell 032 by £163</p>

Appendix B: Fees for 2013/14 certification work

Claim or return	2013/14 indicative fee (£)	2013/14 actual fee (£)	Variance (£)	Explanation for variances
Housing benefits subsidy claim (BEN01)	16,192	16,192	0	n/a
National non-domestic rates return (NNDR3)	n/a	n/a	n/a	No requirement to certify this return in 2013/14
Total	16,192	16,192	0	