



Grant Thornton

An instinct for growth™

Our ref: Our ref: RDP/EJM/W09000020/Fee_Letter_18-19

Mr M Griffiths
Strategic Enabler of Finance and Resources
West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority
West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters
99 Vauxhall Road
Birmingham
B7 4HW

26 March 2018

Grant Thornton UK LLP

The Colmore Building
20 Colmore Circus
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T +44 (0)121 212 4000
F +44 (0)121 212 4014

Dear Mike

Planned audit fee for 2018/19

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act) provides the framework for local public audit. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) has been specified as an appointing person under the Act and the Local Authority (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 and has the power to make auditor appointments for audits of opted- in local government bodies from 2018/19.

For opted- in bodies PSAA's responsibilities include setting fees, appointing auditors and monitoring the quality of auditors' work. Further information on PSAA and its responsibilities are available on the [PSAA website](#).

Scale fee

PSAA published the 2018/19 scale fees for opted-in bodies in March 2018, following a consultation process. Individual scale fees have been reduced by 23 percent from the fees applicable for 2017/18. Further details are set out on the [PSAA website](#). The Fire Authorities scale fee for 2018/19 has been set by PSAA at £29,750.

PSAA prescribes that 'scale fees are based on the expectation that audited bodies are able to provide the auditor with complete and materially accurate financial statements, with supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes'.

The audit planning process for 2018/19, 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

There are no changes to the overall work programme for audits of local government audited bodies for 2018/19. Under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the National Audit Office (NAO) is responsible for publishing the statutory Code of Audit Practice and guidance for auditors. Audits of the accounts for 2018/19 will be undertaken under this Code. Further information on the NAO Code and guidance is available on the [NAO website](#).

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); and
- our work on your whole of government accounts return (if applicable).

PSAA will agree fees for considering objections from the point at which auditors accept an objection as valid, or any special investigations, as a variation to the scale fee.

Value for Money conclusion

The Code requires us to consider whether the Fire Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the Value for Money (VfM) conclusion.

The NAO issued its latest guidance for auditors on value for money work in November 2017. The guidance states that for local government bodies, auditors are required to give a conclusion on whether the Fire Authority has put proper arrangements in place.

The NAO guidance identifies one single criterion for auditors to evaluate:

In all significant respects, the audited body had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

Billing schedule

Fees will be billed as follows:

| Main Audit fee | £ |
|----------------|---------------|
| September 2018 | 7,438 |
| December 2018 | 7,438 |
| March 2019 | 7,437 |
| June 2019 | 7,437 |
| Total | 29,750 |

Outline audit timetable

We will undertake our audit planning and interim audit procedures in November 2018 to March 2019. 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 July 2019 and work on the whole of government accounts return in July 2019.

| Phase of work | Timing | Outputs | Comments |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| Audit planning and interim audit | January to March 2019 | Audit plan | The plan summarises the findings of our audit planning and our approach to the audit of the Authority's accounts and VfM. |
| Final accounts audit | June 2019 | 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 | January to July 2019 | Audit Findings (Report to those charged with governance) | As above |
| Whole of government accounts | July 2019 | Opinion on the WGA return | This work will be completed alongside the accounts audit. |
| Annual audit letter | September 2019 | Annual audit letter to the Authority | The letter will summarise the findings of all aspects of our work. |

Our team

The key members of the audit team for 2018/19 are:

| | Name | Phone Number | E-mail |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|--|
| Engagement Lead | Richard Percival | 07584 591508 | richard.d.percival@uk.gt.com |
| Senior Manager | Emily Mayne | 07880 456112 | emily.j.mayne@uk.gt.com |
| In charge Auditor | Steph Quartermaine | 0121 232 5238 | steph.quartermaine@uk.gt.com |

Additional work

The scale fee excludes any work requested by the Fire Authority 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 Fire Authority.

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 Mark Stocks, our Public Sector Assurance regional lead partner, via mark.c.stocks@uk.gt.com.

Yours sincerely



Richard Percival
Engagement Lead
For Grant Thornton UK LLP