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Phil Seddon
Head of Finance
Rossendale Borough Council
The Business Centre
Futures Park
Bacup
OL13 0BB

Grant Thornton UK LLP
4 Hardman Square
Spinningfields
Manchester M3 3EB

T +44 (0)161 953 6900
F +44 (0)161 953 6901
www.grant-thornton.co.uk

16 February 2018

Dear Phil

Certification work for Rossendale Borough Council for year ended 31 March 2017

We are required to certify the Housing Benefit subsidy claim submitted by Rossendale Borough Council ('the Council'). This certification typically takes place six to nine months after the claim period and represents a final but important part of the process to confirm the Council's entitlement to funding.

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 gave the Secretary of State power to transfer Audit Commission responsibilities to other bodies. Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) took on the transitional responsibilities for HB COUNT issued by the Audit Commission in February 2015.

We have certified the Housing Benefit subsidy claim for the financial year 2016/17 relating to subsidy claimed of £19 million. Further details are set out in Appendix A.

We identified a number of issues from our certification work which we wish to highlight for your attention. There were 2 areas where we identified errors in 2015/16 which required us to do additional testing in 2016/17 in accordance with the HB COUNT methodology. We did not identify any further issues in 2016/17 so will not need to do extended testing next year. We identified 2 other issues in 2016/17 which did not require further work or an adjustment to the subsidy claim.

In preparing the subsidy claim, the Council makes a number of manual adjustments to correct errors identified from the various reports specified by the software provider. However when compiling the claim the client did not include the manual adjustments therefore the claim was amended.

As a result of the errors identified, the claim was amended and qualified, and we reported our findings to the DWP. The DWP may require the Council to undertake further work or provide assurances on the errors we have identified.

The indicative fee for 2016/17 for the Council was based on the final 2014/15 certification fees, reflecting the amount of work required by the auditor to certify the Housing Benefit subsidy claim that year. The indicative scale fee set by PSAA for the Council for 2016/17 was £8,003. This is set out in more detail in Appendix B.

Yours sincerely

Grant Thornton UK LLP.

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Appendix A - Details of claims and returns certified for 2016/17

Claim or return	Value	Amended?	Amendment value	Qualified?	Comments
Housing benefits subsidy claim	£19,387,357	Yes	£6,601	Yes	See below

Appendix B: Fees for 2016/17 certification work

Claim or return	2014/15 fee (£)	2016/17 indicative fee (£)	2016/17 actual fee (£)	Variance (£)	Explanation for variances
Housing benefits subsidy claim (BEN01)	£10,670	£8,003	£8,003	-	
Total	£10,670	£8,003	£8,003	-	