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Colin Everett
Chief Executive
Flintshire County Council
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Date 13 May 2014
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Dear Colin

2014-15 Performance Audit Work and Fees

I am writing to confirm the programme of performance audit work at Flintshire County Council for 2014-15 and the associated fee for that work. This work is delivered under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure), the Local Government Act 1999 and the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013.

As you are aware we will be carrying out a Corporate Assessment at Flintshire Council this year as part of a four-year rolling programme of assessments at all Welsh councils. The Corporate Assessment will provide a position statement of the Council's capacity and capability to deliver continuous improvement. It will, by its nature, examine track record of performance and outcomes as well as examining the key arrangements that are necessary to underpin improvements in services and functions. We will publish a Corporate Assessment report that states whether the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Measure. Carrying out the Corporate Assessment will not require any additional fee from the Council as it will be funded by Welsh Government grant to the Wales Audit Office.

In addition to the Auditor General's audit and assessment work under the Measure, we will undertake a programme of Local Government Studies as set out in the Auditor General's letter of 28 April 2014. These and the specific elements of our audit and assessment work are set out in the table below. Please note that each year's work programme and performance audit fee covers one cycle of Improvement Assessment work. However, as this work does not fit neatly within a period starting on 1 April and ending on 31 March, the delivery of the annual work programme may overlap financial years.

WAO performance audit work 2014-15	
Improvement assessment work	
Corporate Assessment	Review of the Council's capacity and capability to deliver continuous improvement
'Improvement Plan' Audit	Audit of discharge of duty to publish an improvement plan.
'Assessment of Performance' Audit	Audit of discharge of duty to publish an assessment of performance.
Financial Management	Financial position work focussing on financial health, the effectiveness of budget setting arrangements, financial governance systems and progress/track record in delivering on required savings.
Governance	Local scope to be confirmed
Performance Management	Local scope to be confirmed
Local Government Studies	
Joined up working to address Health and Social Care demand – Independence of Older People.	This study will focus on supporting older people to maintain their independence outside of the health and care system by assessing how effective ancillary services are at supporting them to live independently.
Delivering with less – Leisure Services	This study will track the levels of investment in leisure services over the last few years using the methodology developed for the 2013-14 delivering with less study on environmental health services.

Financial position summary	This study will summarise local work on councils' financial position and give an all-Wales picture of financial resilience.
Local work	The focus and scope of local work will be agreed following further discussion with the Authority and based on an assessment of issues relevant to the Authority's programme of improvement

The table below sets out our fees for performance audit work and includes the fee for financial audit work for completeness. The indicative total fee for April 2014 to March 2015 is £320,394 and will be charged in equal instalments between April 2014 and March 2015. If during the course of the audit and assessment any additional work is identified as being necessary, this may incur additional fees. Similarly should an issue arise of such importance that we consider a special inspection to be an appropriate response, we will charge an additional fee to conduct such an inspection.

Fee April 2014 to March 2015	£
Fee for performance audit work	£104,058
Fee for financial audit work	£216,336
Total Fee	£320,394

In addition to the programme of work set out above the Wales Audit Office may be undertaking work at local government bodies in the course of our programme of value for money studies laid before the National Assembly for consideration by its Public Accounts Committee. As many of these studies cut across the boundaries between different parts of the Welsh public sector, they will often be relevant to our work in local government. This work is funded separately by the Welsh Government consolidated fund and therefore does not incur a fee.

The Auditor General also has a duty under the Measure in relation to the coordination of the regulatory functions of the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, those being the Appointed Auditor; the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW); Estyn; and the Welsh Language Commissioner. The range of performance audit work that the Wales

Audit Office and relevant regulators will carry out will be set out in more detail in a Work Plan and Timetable (WP&T) which will be reviewed every quarter.

We will publish an Annual Improvement Report for Flintshire Council summarising our work and that of relevant regulators, and will issue reports (and/or letters) setting out the findings of audit and assessment work. As required by the Measure, these will be copied to Welsh Ministers. We will also provide local feedback on our Studies. As some of our studies are only carried at a selection of authorities, you may not receive a local report: instead we will publish a national report, the recommendations of which will apply to all local authorities. Where appropriate, both our improvement studies and national work may result in shared learning seminars or other outputs.

Should you wish to discuss any element of this work please do not hesitate to contact me or Huw Lloyd Jones (huw.lloydjones@wao.gov.uk) or Paul Goodlad (paul.goodlad@wao.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely



Jane Holownia

WAO Group Director