

Letter of Representation

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

Audit 2008/2009

Letter of Representation

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority - Audit for the year ended 31 March 2009

I confirm to the best of my knowledge and belief, having made appropriate enquiries of other officers and members of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority the following representations given to you in connection with your audit of the Authority's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2009.

Compliance with the statutory authorities

I acknowledge my responsibility under the relevant statutory authorities for preparing the financial statements in accordance with the Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: A Statement of Recommended Practice which present fairly the financial position and financial performance of the Authority, and for making accurate representations to you.

I confirm that Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority has no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statement, other than those already disclosed to you.

Specific representations

I confirm that:

- there are no material amounts relating to unfunded liabilities, curtailments or settlements of past service costs relating to pension provision other than those which have been properly recorded and disclosed in the financial statements;
- the cost of services provided by Sunderland City Council, and the value of loans, cash balances and investments administered by the Council on the Authority's behalf, have been correctly calculated and included in the Authority's financial statements;
- no disclosures or adjustments are required in respect of financial instruments.

Supporting records

All the accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your audit and all the transactions undertaken by the Authority have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records. All other records and related information, including minutes of all committee meetings, have been made available to you.

Going Concern

I am satisfied that it is appropriate to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of the financial statements.

Irregularities

I acknowledge my responsibility for the design and implementation of internal control systems to prevent and detect fraud or error.

There have been no:

- irregularities involving management or employees who have significant roles in the system of internal accounting control;
- irregularities involving other employees that could have a material effect on the financial statements; or
- communications from regulatory agencies concerning non-compliance with, or deficiencies on, financial reporting practices which could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I also confirm that I have disclosed:

- my knowledge of fraud, or suspected fraud, involving either management, employees who have significant roles in internal control or others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements; and
- my knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Law, regulations, contractual arrangements and codes of practice

There are no instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice, likely to have a significant effect on the finances or operations of the Authority.

So far as I am aware, the Authority has complied with all aspects of contractual arrangements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance.

Fair Values

I confirm the reasonableness of the significant assumptions within the financial statements for pensions disclosures under FRS17 and national arrangements for firefighter pensions. I am satisfied that no significant disclosures are required in respect of financial instruments.

Group entities

I am satisfied that there is no requirement to prepare group accounts.

Assets

The following have been properly recorded and, where appropriate, adequately disclosed in the financial statements:

- losses arising from sale & purchase commitments;
- agreements & options to buy back assets previously sold; and
- assets pledged as collateral.

Compensating arrangements

There are no formal or informal compensating balancing arrangements with any of our cash and investment accounts and we have no other lines of credit arrangements.

Contingent liabilities

There are no other contingent liabilities, other than those that have been properly recorded and disclosed in the financial statements. In particular:

- there is no significant pending or threatened litigation, other than those already disclosed in the financial statements;
- there are no material commitments or contractual issues, including capital commitments, other than those already disclosed in the financial statements;
- all known liabilities and commitments in respect of the North East Fire Control Company Limited have been included in the accounts, and;
- no financial guarantees have been given to third parties.

Related party transactions

I confirm the completeness of the information disclosed regarding the identification of related parties.

The identity of, and balances and transactions with, related parties have been properly recorded and where appropriate, adequately disclosed in the financial statements

Post balance sheet events

Since the date of approval of the financial statements by the Governance Committee on 29th June 2009, no additional significant post balance sheet events have occurred which would require additional adjustment or disclosure in the financial statements.

The Authority has no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements, other than those already disclosed.

I am satisfied that the allocation of revenue costs between community fire safety and firefighting / rescue operations in the income and expenditure accounts is reasonably based.

I am not aware of any overpayments which have been made in respect of firefighter pensions or injury payments.

Signed on behalf of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

I confirm that the this letter has been discussed and agreed by the Governance Committee on 28th September 2009

Iain Bathgate, Chief Fire Officer

Keith Beardmore, Finance Officer

Dave Smith, Acting Clerk to the Authority

Mr G N Cook, Chairman of Governance Committee (on behalf of those charged with governance)

28th September 2009