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Your reference:

15 January 2021

Dear Mr Suter,

### Letter of Representations

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of the Fire and Rescue Authority for the year ended 31 March 2020. We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Authority financial position of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority as of 31 March 2020 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland), which involves an examination of the accounting system, internal control and related data to the extent you considered necessary in the circumstances, and is not designed to identify - nor necessarily be expected to disclose - all fraud, shortages, errors and other irregularities, should any exist.

Accordingly, we make the following representations, which are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

#### A. Financial Statements and Financial Records

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, under the relevant statutory authorities, for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.
2. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Authority, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the financial statements referred to above give a true and fair view of the financial position, financial performance (or results of operations and cash



flows of the Authority in accordance with [the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20. We have approved the financial statements.

3. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.
4. As members of management of the authority, we believe that the Authority has a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20, that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. We have disclosed to you any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that we have made to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our system of internal controls .
5. We believe that the effects of any unadjusted audit differences, summarised in the accompanying schedule, accumulated by you during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole and therefore we have not corrected these differences.

#### **6. B. Non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud**

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible to determine that the Authority's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible to identify and address any non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.
2. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
4. We have disclosed to you, and provided you full access to information and any internal investigations relating to, all instances of identified or suspected non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud, known to us that may have affected the Authority (regardless of the source or form and including, without limitation, allegations by "whistleblowers") including non-compliance

matters:

- involving financial statements;
- related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Authority's financial statements;
- related to laws and regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the Authority's activities, its ability to continue to operate, or to avoid material penalties;
- involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal controls, or others; or
- in relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other non-compliance with laws and regulations communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

### **C. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions**

1. We have provided you with:
  - Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
  - Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
  - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and all material transactions, events and conditions are reflected in the financial statements, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic
3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and Standards & Governance Committee held through the period to the most recent meeting on the following date: 17 November 2020.
4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Authority's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.
5. We believe that the significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
6. We have disclosed to you, and the Authority has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.
7. From the date of our last management representation letter through the date of this letter we have disclosed to you any unauthorized access to our information technology systems that either occurred or to the best of our knowledge is reasonably likely to have occurred based on our investigation, including of reports submitted to us by third parties (including regulatory agencies, law enforcement agencies and security consultants) , to the extent that such unauthorized access to our information technology systems is reasonably likely to have a material impact to the financial statements, in each case or in the aggregate

### **D. Liabilities and Contingencies**

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to you and are appropriately reflected in the financial statements.
2. We have informed you of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.

3. We have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in Note 20 to the financial statements all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

#### **E. Subsequent Events**

1. There have been no events subsequent to period end, including events related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

#### **F. Other information**

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information. The other information comprises the Narrative Report.
2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

#### **G. Use of the Work of a Specialist**

1. We agree with the findings of the specialists that we engaged to evaluate the valuation of land and buildings and in generating the IAS19 pension disclosures and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the financial statements and the underlying accounting records. We did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and we are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.

#### **H. Estimates**

1. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimates have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.
2. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making valuation of assets and IAS19 disclosure estimates appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
3. We confirm that the disclosures made in the financial statements with respect to the accounting estimates are complete, including the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the valuation of assets and IAS19 disclosure and made in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.
4. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimates and disclosures in the financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the COVID-19 pandemic

## I. Retirement benefits

1. On the basis of the process established by us and having made appropriate enquiries, we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the scheme liabilities are consistent with our knowledge of the business. All significant retirement benefits and all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for.

Signed on behalf of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

I confirm that this letter has been discussed and agreed by the Standards and Governance Committee

Signed:

Position: Chief Finance Officer Date:

Signed:

Position: Chairman of the Standards & Governance Committee

Date:

### Appendix

**Summary of unadjusted differences** - We acknowledge the following misstatements to the financial statements and/or disclosures which were not corrected by management as they are not material either individually or collectively.

Uncorrected misstatements 31 March 2020 (£000)	Effect on the current period:	Balance Sheet (Decrease)/Increase				
		Assets current	Assets non current Debit/(Credit)	Liabilities current Debit/(Credit)	Liabilities non-current Debit/(Credit)	Equity components Debit/(Credit)
<b>Known differences:</b>						
• Council tax income understatement	(374)	374				
• Business rates income overstatement	373	(373)				
• Pension Fund asset overstatement			(206)			206
<b>Judgemental differences:</b>						
• Land & Buildings Valuations – assets not valued in year			611			(611)
<b>Balance sheet totals</b>						
<b>Income effect of uncorrected misstatements (before tax)</b>	(1)	1	405			(405)