

**Corporate Resource and  
Transformation**

Strategic Director: Alan Bethune

Ernst & Young  
Grosvenor House  
Grosvenor Square  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
S015 2BE

Date: 25 October 2024

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the consolidated and Council financial statements of New Forest District Council (“the Group and Council”) for the year ended 31 March 2023. 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 consolidated and Council financial statements give a true and fair view of (or ‘present fairly, in all material respects,’) the Group and Council financial position of New Forest District Council as of 31 March 2023 and of its financial performance (or operations) and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with, for the Group and the Council, CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022)).

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our consolidated and Council financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), 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, for the Group and Council, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022)).
2. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Group and Council, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the consolidated and Council financial statements. We believe the consolidated and Council 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 Group and Council in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022)), and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the financial statements.

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3. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the Group and Council financial statements are appropriately described in the Group and Council financial statements.
4. As members of management of the Group and Council, we believe that the Group and Council have 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 2022/23 for the Group and Council that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
5. We confirm the Group and Council does not have securities (debt or equity) listed on a recognised exchange.
6. We have confirmed to you any changes in service organisations within the Group and Council since the last audited financial year.

**B. Non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud**

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible to determine that the Group and Council's business activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible to identify and address any noncompliance with applicable laws or regulations, including fraud.
2. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of a system of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and that we believe we have appropriately fulfilled those responsibilities.
3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the consolidated and Council financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
4. We have no knowledge of any identified or suspected noncompliance with laws or regulations, including fraud, that may have affected the Group or Council (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers"), including non-compliance matters:
  - Involving financial improprieties
  - Related to laws or regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the consolidated and Council financial statements
  - Related to laws or regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the consolidated and Council financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the Group and Council's business, its ability to continue in business, or to avoid material penalties
  - Involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal control, or others
  - In relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other noncompliance 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 are reflected in the consolidated and Council financial statements.
3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of shareholders, directors and committees of directors (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on the following date: 25 October 2024.
4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Group and Council'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 consolidated and Council financial statements.
5. We believe that the methods, significant assumptions and the data we used in making accounting estimates and related disclosures are appropriate and consistently applied to achieve recognition, measurement and disclosure that is in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.
6. We have disclosed to you, and the Group and Council has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the consolidated and Council financial statements in the event of noncompliance, 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, to the extent that we are aware, any (1) unauthorized access to our information technology systems that either occurred or is reasonably likely to have occurred, 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 effect on the consolidated and Council financial statements, in each case or in the aggregate, and (2) ransomware attacks when we paid or are contemplating paying a ransom, regardless of the amount.

8. We have disclosed to you, and provided you full access to information and any internal investigations relating to, unauthorised access to our information technology systems that has a material effect on the consolidated and Council financial statements, including disclosures.

**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 consolidated and Council 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 to litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in Note 32 to the consolidated and parent Authority financial statements all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

**E. Going Concern**

1. Note 46 to the consolidated and Council financial statements discloses all the matters of which we are aware that are relevant to the Group and authority's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, our plans for future action, and the feasibility of those plans.

**F. Subsequent Events**

1. Other than the events described in Note 6 to the consolidated and Council financial statements, there have been no events subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the consolidated and parent Authority financial statements or notes thereto.

**G. Group audits**

1. There are no significant restrictions on our ability to distribute the retained profits of the Group because of statutory, contractual, exchange control or other restrictions other than those indicated in the Group financial statements.
2. Necessary adjustments have been made to eliminate all material intra-group unrealised profits on transactions amongst parent Council, subsidiary undertakings and associated undertakings.

**H. Other information**

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

**I. Climate-related matters**

1. We confirm that to the best of our knowledge all information that is relevant to the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of climate-related matters has been considered and the Group and Council have reflected these in the consolidated and parent financial statements.

Yours faithfully

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Chief Financial Officer

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Chairman of the Audit Committee