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Please ask for: Andrew Lovegrove

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30 July 2018

Dear Sirs

**Herefordshire Council
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018**

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of Herefordshire Council and its subsidiary undertaking, **Hoople Limited** for the year ended 31 March 2018 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the group and parent Council financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18 and applicable law.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

Group Financial Statements

- i We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the group and parent Council's financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18 ("the Code"); in particular the group and parent Council financial statements are fairly presented in accordance therewith.
- ii We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the group and parent Council and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the group and parent Council financial statements.
- iii The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the group and parent Council financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of any regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the group and parent Council financial statements in the event of non-compliance.

- iv We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
- v Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
- vi Except as disclosed in the group and parent Council financial statements:
 - a) there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
 - b) none of the assets of the group and parent Council has been assigned, pledged or mortgaged
 - c) there are no material prior year charges or credits, nor exceptional or non-recurring items requiring separate disclosure.
- vii We confirm that we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities for IAS19 Employee Benefits disclosures are consistent with our knowledge. We confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. We also confirm that all significant post-employment benefits have been identified and properly accounted for.
- viii Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code.
- ix All events subsequent to the date of the group and parent Council financial statements and for which International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.
- x We have considered the unadjusted misstatements schedule included in your Audit Findings Report and attached. We have not adjusted the group and parent Council financial statements for these misstatements brought to our attention as they are immaterial to the results of the group and parent Council and its financial position at the year-end.

The group and parent Council financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

- xi Actual or possible litigation and claims have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards.
- xii We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the group and parent Council financial statements.
- xiii We believe that the group and parent Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the group and parent Council's needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the group and parent Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

- xiv We are satisfied that the council is not exposed to any risks or rewards that require disclosing in the financial statements due to the arrangement with Herefords new university, NMiTE.
- xv We have considered the results of the work of the property Valuer, which we have used as a basis of valuation of non-current assets disclosed in note 10 in the 2017/18 financial statements, and we have taken reasonable steps to satisfy that the basis of these valuations and any changes in assumptions are reasonable and appropriately disclosed in the financial statements.
- xvi The majority of assets held were revalued in the year however we have conducted a review of the potential impact of market forces on our property, plant and equipment (PPE) asset base. By applying independent professional guidance this has indicated that there is a potential understatement in the financial statements of up to £6.5m. This potential can only be verified by procuring a complete asset revaluation dated 31 March 2018. We are satisfied that the indices used in the review are appropriate to Herefordshire, and being an immaterial estimated impact, we are satisfied that further valuations are not necessary and the PPE value in the financial statements is not materially misstated.

Information Provided

- xvii We have provided you with:
 - a) access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the group and parent Council financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - b) additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
 - c) unrestricted access to persons within the Council from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- xviii We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware.
- xix All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the group and parent Council financial statements.
- xx We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the group and parent Council financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- xxi We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the group and parent Council and involves:
 - a) management;
 - b) employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - c) others where the fraud could have a material effect on the group and parent Council financial statements.

- xxii We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the group and parent Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.
- xxiii We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.
- xxiv We have disclosed to you the identity of the group and parent Council's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- xxv We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the group and parent Council financial statements.

Annual Governance Statement

- xxvi We are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

Narrative Report

- i The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect our understanding of the group and parent Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the group and parent Council financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was minuted by the Council's Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 30 July 2018.

Yours faithfully

Name Andrew Lovegrove
Position Chief Finance Officer
Date 30 July 2018

Name Councillor PD Newman
Position Chairman: Audit and Governance Committee
Date 30 July 2018

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body