

The Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board

**Assessor and
Electoral Registration Officer
Frank W Finlayson**

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Esther Scoburgh, Senior Audit Manager
Audit Scotland
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Edinburgh
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23 September 2024

Dear Esther

Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board Annual Accounts 2023/24

- 1 This representation letter is provided about your audit of the annual accounts of Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board for the year ended 31 March 2024 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and have been properly prepared, and for expressing other opinions on the Remuneration Report, Management Commentary, and Annual Governance Statement.
- 2 I confirm to the best of my knowledge and belief and having made appropriate enquiries of the Convenor and Board Members, the following representations given to you in connection with your audit of Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board's annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024.

General

- 3 Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board and I have fulfilled our statutory responsibilities for the preparation of the 2023/24 annual accounts. All the accounting records, documentation, and other matters which I am aware are relevant to the preparation of the annual accounts have been made available to you for the purposes of your audit. All transactions undertaken by Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board have been recorded in the accounting records and are properly reflected in the financial statements.
- 4 I confirm that the effects of uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole. I am not aware of any uncorrected misstatements other than those reported by you.

Financial Reporting Framework

- 5 The annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24 (2023/24 accounting code), and the requirements of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, and The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014.
- 6 In accordance with the 2014 Regulations, I have ensured that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board at 31 March 2024 and the transactions for 2023/24.

Accounting Policies and Estimates

- 7 All material accounting policies applied are as shown in the notes to the accounts. The accounting policies are determined by the 2023/24 accounting code where applicable. All accounting policies applied are appropriate to Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board's circumstances and have been consistently applied.
- 8 The significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates are reasonable and properly reflected in the financial statements. Judgements used in making estimates have been based on the latest available, reliable information. Estimates have been revised where there are changes in the circumstances on which the original estimate was based or as a result of new information or experience.

Going Concern Basis of Accounting

9 I have assessed Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board's ability to continue to use the going concern basis of accounting and have concluded that it is appropriate. I am not aware of any material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt on Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting.

Assets

10 There are no plans or intentions that are likely to affect the carrying value or classification of the assets recognised within the financial statements.

11 The pension assumptions made by the actuary in the IAS 19 report for Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board have been reviewed and I confirm that they are consistent with management's own view.

Liabilities

12 All liabilities at 31 March 2024 of which I am aware have been reported in the financial statements.

13 There are no plans or intentions that are likely to affect the carrying value or classification of the liabilities recognised in the financial statements.

Contingent Liabilities

14 There are no significant contingent liabilities, other than those disclosed in Note 18 to the financial statements, arising either under formal agreement or through formal undertakings requiring disclosure in the accounts. All known contingent liabilities have been fully and properly disclosed in accordance with the 2023/24 accounting code and IAS 37.

Litigation and Claims

15 All known actual or possible legal claims have been disclosed to you and have been accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with the 2023/24 accounting code.

Fraud

16 I understand my responsibilities for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control to prevent fraud and I believe I have appropriately fulfilled those responsibilities.

17 I have provided you with all information in relation to:

- my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated because of fraud
- any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the financial statements, and
- fraud or suspected fraud that I am aware of involving management, employees who have a significant role in internal control, or others that could have a material effect on the financial statements.

Laws and Regulations

18 I 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.

Related Party Transactions

19 All material transactions with related parties have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with the 2023/24 accounting code. I have made available to you the identity of all the Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

Remuneration Report

20 The Remuneration Report has been prepared in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, and all required information of which I am aware has been provided to you.

Management Commentary

21 I confirm that the Management Commentary has been prepared in accordance with the statutory guidance and the information is consistent with the financial statements.

Corporate Governance

22 I confirm that the Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board has undertaken a review of the system of internal control during 2023/24 to establish the extent to which it complies with proper practices set out in the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016. I have disclosed to you all deficiencies in internal control identified from this review or of which I am otherwise aware.

23 I confirm that the Annual Governance Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016 and the information is consistent with the financial statements. There have been no changes in the corporate governance arrangements or issues identified, since 31 March 2024, which require to be reflected.

Events Subsequent to the Date of the Balance Sheet

24 All events subsequent to 31 March 2024 for which the 2023/24 accounting code requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Yours sincerely

Brian Porter CPFA
Treasurer