

to Grant Thornton UK LLP
The Colmore Building
20 Colmore Circus
BIRMINGHAM
B4 6AT

date 23 November 2020

my ref

Dear Sirs

Merseyside Pension Fund
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of Merseyside Pension Fund for the year ended 31 March 2020 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the 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 2019/20 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:

Financial Statements

- i. We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the Fund'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 2019/20 ("the Code"); in particular the financial statements are fairly presented in accordance therewith.
- ii. We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the Fund and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the financial statements.
- iii. The Fund has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements 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 any regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the 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. We are satisfied that the material judgements used in the preparation of the financial statements are soundly based, in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements.
- vi. Except as disclosed in the financial statements:
 - a. there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
 - b. none of the assets of the Fund 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. 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.
- viii. All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.
- ix. We have considered the adjusted misstatements, and misclassification and disclosures changes schedules included in your Audit Findings Report. The financial statements have been amended for these misstatements, misclassifications and disclosure changes and are free of material misstatements, including omissions.
- x. We have considered the matters included in your Audit Findings Report in respect of:
 - the differences in asset valuations as the result of more recent updated information being available.

We have not adjusted the financial statements for these matters brought to our attention as they are immaterial to the results of the Fund and its financial position at the year-end and in respect of investment valuations there are no indications of weakness in management's arrangements for estimating investment values at year end. The 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 financial statements.
- xiii. We have updated our going concern assessment and cashflow forecasts in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. We continue to believe that the Fund's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the Fund's needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.
- xiv. The outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), declared by the World Health Organisation as a "Global Pandemic" on the 11th March 2020, has impacted global financial markets. Travel restrictions have been implemented by many countries. Market activity has been impacted in many sectors.

As at the valuation date, our independent valuers have stated that they consider that they can attach less weight to previous market evidence for comparison purposes to inform opinions of value. Indeed, the current response to COVID-19 means that they are faced with an unprecedented set of circumstances on which to base a judgement.

The Pensions Fund's valuations are therefore reported on the basis of 'material valuation uncertainty' as per VPS 3 and VPGA 10 of the RICS Valuation – Global Standards effective from 31 January 2020. Consequently, less certainty – and a higher degree of caution – should be attached to our valuation than would normally be the case.

For the avoidance of doubt, the inclusion of the 'material valuation uncertainty' declaration above does not mean that the valuation cannot be relied upon. Rather, the phrase is used in order to be clear and transparent with all parties, in a professional manner that – in the current extraordinary circumstances – less certainty can be attached to the valuation than would otherwise be the case. The material uncertainty clause is a disclosure, not a disclaimer.

Information Provided

- xv. We have provided you with:

- a. 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;
 - b. additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
 - c. access to persons within the Fund via remote arrangements, in compliance with the nationally specified social distancing requirements established by the government in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- xvi. We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware.
 - xvii. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
 - xviii. 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.
 - xix. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the Fund, 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 financial statements.
 - xx. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.
 - xxi. 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.
 - xxii. There have been no communications with The Pensions Regulator or other regulatory bodies during the year or subsequently concerning matters of non-compliance with any legal duty.
 - xxiii. We are not aware of any reports having been made to The Pensions Regulator by any of our advisors.
 - xxiv. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Fund'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 financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was minuted by the **Pensions Committee** at its meeting on **2 November 2020** and by the **Audit and Risk Management Committee** at its meeting on the **23 November 2020**.

Yours faithfully

Name Shaer Halewood
 Position Director of Finance & Investment (S151).
 Date November 2020.

Name.....
 Position Chair of Audit & Risk Committee .
 Date November 2020.

Signed on behalf of **Wirral Council** as administering body of **Merseyside Pension Fund**.