

4 February 2010

Mr Neil Schneider  
Chief Executive  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
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Dear Neil

## Objection to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's accounts for year ending 31 March 2009

I have now formally determined to not uphold the objection to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009 in relation to the taxi licensing account. I have enclosed a copy of the determination. I am now in a position to close the audit for the year in question and I will write to the Council again shortly setting out the process for that. I would like to record my thanks for the assistance provided by Andy Bryson and David Kitching in my consideration of the issues raised in the objection.

I found that there is a good degree of openness in relation to this account and the Council's arrangements, and the Council has already provided a good deal of information to the trade. However you will have seen that I have made two suggestions for the Council to consider.

Firstly, the Council should provide more information on the underlying position of the taxi licensing account. In particular, there should be a projection for the medium term, say over the next three years, on a rolling basis, which sets out the budgeted expenditure, projected surplus and therefore the indicated fee levels. Secondly, the Council should continue to seek information on comparative costs from other authorities to help identify if there are any further opportunities to reduce costs and licensing fees within the Borough.

I understand from Andy Bryson the Council will have agreed to take these suggestions forward.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Snowball  
District Auditor

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