

## Final External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22 in respect of Ticehurst Parish Council – ES0099

### Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with Proper Practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### External auditor report 2021/22

On 28 September 2022, we issued a report detailing the results of our limited assurance review of Sections 1 and 2 of this authority's Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2022. We explained that we were unable to certify completion of the review at that time. We are now in a position to certify completion of the review.

The external auditor report given in Section 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return requires amendments as follows:

Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The smaller authority failed to approve the AGAR in time to publish it before 1 July 2022, the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and did not disclose this by answering 'No' to Section 1, Box 1.

The AGAR has not been signed in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015:

- Section 2 was not signed by the Responsible Financial Officer. The amended Section 2 provided shows the signature of the Responsible Financial Officer however we have confirmed that the website shows the original unsigned version.

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. Please ensure that amendments are corrected in the prior year comparatives when completing next year's AGAR:

- Unpaid direct debits as at the year end have been incorrectly included as reconciling items in the bank reconciliation. The figures in Section 2, Boxes 4, 6, 7 and 8 should read £39,198, £133,013, £136,087 and £136,087 respectively

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2022/23 for the exercise of public rights, since the period for the exercise of public rights did not include the first 10 working days of. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the

Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2023/24.

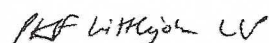
The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The AGAR had to be sent back for amendment. The amended AGAR Section 2 provided shows the signature of the Responsible Financial Officer however we have confirmed that the website shows the original unsigned version

The Annual Internal Audit Report focuses on a series of internal control objectives covering an authority's key financial and accounting systems and concludes whether, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority. We note that the internal auditor has not provided a conclusion on the following internal control objectives: N in respect of publication requirements or an adequate explanation where the response given is 'Blank'. The Annual Internal Audit Report will inform the authority's response to assertions 2 and 6 in the annual governance statement. As a result, the authority must ensure that assurance that has not been provided via these control objectives has been sought elsewhere.

The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance assertion in Section 1, Box 4, but it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified.

### **External auditor certificate 2021/22**

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.



**PKF Littlejohn LLP**  
**30/09/2022**