

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **Chipping Norton Town Council**

1 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 2021; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

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Except for the matters reported below on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the 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.

It was noted from our intermediate level testing that the Council did not formally review the External Audit report from the 2020 review performed during the year. Although no points were raised in the prior year that required further action by the Council, failure to review this suggests a 'No' answer should have been given to Box 3 of Section 1 of the return.

The locum clerk appointed during the year has identified that the Council is a sole trustee when previously this was thought not to be the case. Although the Council has resolved to correct the reporting in relation to this going forwards, this means it has been incorrect to this point and as a result the Council should have answered 'No' to Assertions 1 and 3 on Section 1 of the return.

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

The Council answered Yes to Box 11 of Section 2 of the AGAR however this is inconsistent with the 'Not applicable' answer given in Section 1. As noted above, Section 1 was incorrect and should have been reported as 'yes' but there is no further impact from this inconsistency other than that already reported above.

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We ~~certify~~ ~~do not certify~~* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2021.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'MOORE' in a cursive style.

Date

25/09/2021