

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **Over Norton Parish 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 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor report 2021/22

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.

The year-end bank reconciliation shows an unrepresented cheque of £25. This has been included as an expense in Box 6 of Section 2 of the AGAR and reduces the balances carried forward in Box 7 as well which is the correct treatment. Unrepresented cheques should also be taken into account in Box 8 of the AGAR, so where a Council follows the receipts and payments basis, Box 7 equals Box 8 on Section 2. This year the value of unrepresented cheques has not been taken into account in Box 8 and so the value included is greater overstated by this amount. This should be taken into account when completing the 2023 return.

On completion of our 2021 review the Council amended boxes 2 and 3 of their return. However, the version available on the council's website is the pre-adjusted version, therefore, the 2022 AGAR should have been marked 'Restated' at the top of the comparative column to ensure the public are aware of this change from what was provided to them for inspection last year. We would therefore anticipate a 'No' response in respect of Assertion 1 on the 2023 return.

On brief inspection of the Council's website, it could be seen that neither the 'Report of the External Auditor' nor the 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit' have been published. It is a requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulation 2015 that these be published with the final version of the AGAR if amendments have been made. We would expect this to be corrected at the Council's earliest opportunity and also to be taken into account when completing the assertions on the 2023 return.

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

The Internal Auditor has answered 'Yes' to Assertion K of the Annual Internal Audit Report. This assertion is only applicable if the Council claimed exemption in the prior year. As this Council was neither entitled to claim exemption nor did it claim exemption, we would have expected the Assertion to be answered as 'Not covered' in line with the guidance on the AGAR.

The Internal Auditor has answered 'Yes' to Assertion N of the Annual Internal Audit Report. As the Council has not published the amended AGAR, the Report of the External Auditor nor the Notice of Conclusion of the 2021 audit on their website as required under the regulations, we would have anticipated this response to have been 'No'.

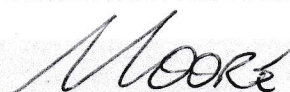
3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We 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 2022.

External Auditor Name

 **MOORE**

External Auditor Signature



Date

24/09/2022