

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of

LAVENDON PARISH COUNCIL – BU0114

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

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.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

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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 (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 AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. Section 2, Box 7 for the current year does not agree to Boxes 1+2+3-(4+5+6) and an adequate explanation has not been provided by the smaller authority. The figures included in Boxes 1 to 6 add up to £76,692 giving rise to a difference of £5,418.

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:

- The smaller authority has not addressed the 'except for' matter raised by the external auditor when qualifying the prior year AGAR. As was the case for the 2019/20 AGAR, the smaller authority has not included the borrowings from PWLB in Section 2, Box 10. Box 10 should read £3,990 and £1,178 for the prior and current years, respectively.

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

The smaller authority has not provided:

- an adequate explanation for the difference between Section 2, Boxes 7 and 8
- an adequate explanation for the variance between the prior and current year values in Boxes 4 and 6 of Section 2

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 2021/22 for the exercise of public rights, since the notice regarding the period for the exercise of public rights was not published before 1 July 2021 (the date of the notice is 1 July which is the same day as the first day of the period) and hence the period does not include the first working day of July. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2022/23.

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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 2021.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

27/09/2021

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)