

## Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **BEAUDESERT AND HENLEY IN ARDEN JOINT PARISH COUNCIL – WA0025**

### 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 (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.

Section 1, Assertion 3 has been incorrectly completed. In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations in respect of Notice of meetings and payroll related matters. Therefore, the smaller authority should have responded 'No' to this assertion. We understand that both issues have been rectified since the year end.

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 figures in Section 2 Boxes 1 and 8 for the prior year are incorrect due to transcription errors and should read £61,923 and £67,716 respectively.
- Section 2, Box 4 for the current year incorrectly includes £187 of items which are not staff costs as defined in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide. Additionally, Box 6 for the current year includes £6,442 of staff related costs which should have been included in the Box 4 figure. The figures in Section 2, Boxes 4 and 6 for the current year should read £26,081 and £82,010 (respectively). Similarly, £1,514 of expenses have incorrectly been included in Box 6 in the prior year, therefore Box 6 in the comparative column should read £110,608 and Box 4 should read £6,864.

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

The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance assertion in Section 1, Box 5 but it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified. The internal auditor has drawn attention to the same matter in the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report.

In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to weaknesses in relation to the fixed asset register. The smaller authority has confirmed that this matter has been addressed after the year end.

### 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

**PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP**

External Auditor Signature

*PKF Littlejohn LLP*

Date

17/09/2022

\* 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](http://www.nao.org.uk))