

## Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

Cuckfield 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 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

### 2 External auditor report 2023/24

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.

We identified during our review of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return that box 2 of the prior year column (2023) on Section 2 - Accounting Statements does not agree to the figures provided on the 2022-23 form. The figure reads £241,647 and it should read £241,467. This would appear to be a transposition error. As a result, the prior year column boxes 1-6 do not add down to box 7. This is a breach of proper practices and as a result a 'No' response should have been provided at Assertion 3 on the 2023-24 Annual Governance Statement. As the figures for the 2024 year appear to be correctly stated we do not believe this should impact the 2024-25 return.

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

We note that there appears to be a typographical error within the year for the date of Council's approval of Section 2. The council should ensure in the future that the dates are accurately entered and are clearly stated before submission.

### 3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

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 2024.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

Date

28/08/2024