

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of **Newbold Verdon Parish Council – LE0168**

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 2020; 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. Please ensure that amendments are corrected in the prior year comparatives when completing next year's AGAR:

- Unpaid direct debits as at the year end have been incorrectly included as items of expenditure and as reconciling items in the bank reconciliation. The figures in Section 2, Boxes 6, 7 and 8 should read £66,833, £186,687 and £186,687 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 variance between the prior and current year values in Boxes 3, 4 and 6 of Section 2 due to the finance software system for the 2019/20 year being inaccessible.

In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, and their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to significant weaknesses in relation to the authorisation of expenditure, recording of assets and budgeting. The smaller authority must ensure that action is taken to address these areas of weakness in a timely manner. This is reflected in the 'No' responses to objectives B, D and H in the Annual Internal Audit Report.

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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 2020.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

21/10/2020

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2019/20 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)