

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF ANNUAL AUDIT

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

- 1 The audit of accounts for Wantage Town Council for the year ended 31 March 2022 has been completed and the accounts have been published.**
- 2 The Annual Return is available for inspection by any local government elector in the area of Wantage Town Council on application and without payment to**

**M Green
Wantage Town Council
Council Offices
The Beacon
Portway
Wantage
OX12 9BX**

To arrange a viewing please contact Miss Green by letter at the above address or telephone 01235 763459 between the hours of 9.30 and 12.30 on a weekday or email

mandi.green@wantage-town-council.gov.uk

- 3 Copies will be provided to any person on payment of £0.20 for each copy of the Annual Return**

Announcement made by: WP Falkenau. Town Clerk

Date: 31 October 2022

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

20/06/2022

and recorded as minute reference:

item 23

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman



Clerk



www.wantagetowncouncil.gov.uk

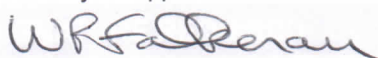
Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance	
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.	
1. Balances brought forward	627,894	624,970	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.	
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	344,400	344,400	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3. (+) Total other receipts	23,204	30,833	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.	
4. (-) Staff costs	133,959	121,684	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.	
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).	
6. (-) All other payments	236,569	229,441	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).	
7. (=) Balances carried forward	624,970	649,078	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).	
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	639,965	662,324	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.	
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	496,488	501,340	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.	
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	N/A	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
			✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

20/06/2022

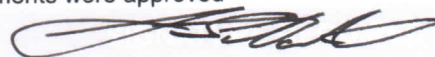
I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

20/06/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

Item 24

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

Wantage Town Council

<https://wantagetowncouncil.gov.uk/> AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2022, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2021/22 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2020/21, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2020/21 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements			✓
M. The authority, during the previous year (2020-21) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2020/21 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

16/06/2021

22/11/2021

23/03/2022

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Kevin Rose ACMA - IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

14/06/2022

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Town Clerk/Treasurer
W.P. Falkenau



Telephone: Wantage 01235-763459
Email: clerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Wantage Town Council
Council Offices - Portway - Wantage - Oxon OX12 9BX

31 October 2022

Moore
Rutland House
Minerva Business Park
Lynch Wood
PETERBOROUGH
PE2 6PZ

Dear Sir

Your ref: 979/1146248 – Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22
2 External auditor report 2021/22

Your report dated 23 September 2022 has been noted. Please be advised that the Town Council does not accept the comments under paragraph 2. Emails advising of this were sent to you on 4 and 14 October 2022. To date there has been no acknowledgement or response.

In an email to you of 24 June 2022, evidence was provided that reviews of the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders had been conducted during the Financial Year ending on 31 March 2022 (minute 12 b page 4019 of a meeting held on 29 November 2021 refers).

The comment regarding Notice of Public Rights relating to 2020/21 is also noted. Whilst in your opinion the notice in 2020/21 should not have been published on the day that the Council approved the statements citing Regulation 12(3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. I have referred to Regulation 12(3) and in my opinion the action of this Council was not at odds with this regulation. The period of the exercise of public rights was commenced on the day "...after the date on which the authority complies with paragraph (2)(c), on behalf of that authority..."

Referring back to 2020/21, there was also a statement that the Code of Conduct had not been reviewed. This statement was made without referral to me. In fact, the Town Council had reviewed the Code of Conduct in 2020/21 at a Council meeting on 8 February 2021, agenda item 75.

The Town Mayor has expressed concern that the report from yourselves does not identify the auditor signing off the report. Could you please supply the name of the responsible auditor?

On the 25 October an email was sent to the Audit Administrator requesting a copy of your complaints procedure. Again, no acknowledgement or response has been received.

In the absence of a response from yourselves, this letter will be published alongside your report.

Yours faithfully

Bill Falkenau

Clerk to Wantage Town Council

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **Wantage Town 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 2020/21 External Audit Report highlighted that the Notice of Public Rights period was not correctly undertaken. As this period was undertaken during the 2021/22 year, the Council should have answered 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement.

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

As part of our testing in relation to this authority being an intermediate size Council, we requested information showing the review of certain governance documents including Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Although the Council were able to provide these documents had been reviewed, the review was not during the Financial Year ending on 31 March 2022. The Council is required to review all of these areas on a regular basis per the JPAG Practitioners' Guide at Section 1.14, best practice being annually. Where reviews are undertaken under a different pattern, they should be diarised to ensure these are completed regularly.

3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

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 2022.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

 **MOORE**

External Auditor Signature



Date

23/09/2022