

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

Austrey Parish Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor limited assurance opinion 2024/25

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 council has recorded a 'No' response at Assertion 7 which relates to the council taking appropriate action on all matters raised in the reports from the internal and external auditor. Following our review, the Council have dealt with all points raised by the auditors, therefore we would have expected Assertion 7 to have been answered 'Yes'.

Section 2 Accounting Statements has not been correctly completed. Boxes 3 and 6 include transfers between bank current and deposit accounts which, per Paragraph 2.14 of JPAG Practitioners' Guide 2024, do not represent receipts or payments for the authority. We would expect these figures to be restated on the next year's AGAR, and marked as such, to bring it to the attention of the reader. We would expect this to be considered in the council's response to Assertion 1 on the 2025/26 return.

There are no other matters affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority.

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

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 2025.

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Moore', written over a horizontal line.

Date

15/07/2025