

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2025/26

In respect of

Pentney Parish Council – NO0344

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 2026; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2025/26

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.

Information received from the internal auditor highlights that Section 1, Assertion 1 has been incorrectly completed, as the budget approval decision was not minuted, the precept decision not separate and subsequent to budget approval, and a reserve justification was not included in the budget. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objective D.

Information received from the internal auditor highlights that Section 1, Assertion 2 has been incorrectly completed, the smaller authority did not review and adopt Standing Orders. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objective B.

Information received from the internal auditor highlights that Section 1, Assertion 3 has been incorrectly completed, as an employee did not have a valid employment contract. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objective G.

Information received from the internal auditor highlights that Section 1, Assertion 4 has been incorrectly completed, the smaller authority failed to publish the interim external auditor report and the final signed AGAR by 30 September 2025, the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objective N.

Information received from the internal auditor highlights that Section 1, Assertion 5 has been incorrectly completed. Information received from the smaller authority highlights that risk management arrangements were not reviewed and approved by the authority as a whole during the year. As a result, this assertion should have been answered ‘No’. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objective C.

Information received from the internal auditor highlights that Section 1, Assertion 10 has been incorrectly completed, as the smaller authority is not registered with the information commissioner’s office and has not adopted an IT policy. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objective O.

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. Information received from the smaller authority highlights that certain adjustments are required to the balance reported in Section 2, Box 9 (Fixed Assets and Long-Term Assets). Consequently, the amount currently disclosed is incorrect. The authority should review the fixed asset balance as at 31 March 2026 and update this in the 2026-27 AGAR.

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

None.

3 External auditor certificate 2025/26

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 2026.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature



Date

31/08/2026