Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2025/26

In respect of **Hanborough 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 2026; 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 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, 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 transitioned from the receipts and payments basis of accounts used previously to the income and expenditure basis. Paragraph 2.91 of the SAPPP Practitioners' Guide 2025 requires that prior year figures are restated to be on the same basis as current year where there is a change of basis. From the annual return provided, it appears that the prior year's figures have not been restated to be on the same basis therefore this is a breach of proper practices. As a result of this we would have expected Assertion 1 on the 2025/26 Annual Governance Statement to have been answered 'No'.

The Council has recorded a 'Yes' response at Assertion 1, thereby confirming that it has prepared the accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. However, VAT reclaimed from HMRC has been included within Box 3 (Total Other Receipts) and VAT paid has been included within Box 6 (Total Other Payments). Paragraph 5.133 of the SAPPP Practitioners' Guide 2025 states that, where Income and Expenditure accounting is used, entries on the AGAR should be reported net of VAT, and amounts of VAT collected from customers, paid to suppliers, and payable to, or repayable from, HMRC should be posted to a balance sheet account. As a result, the accounting statements have not been prepared in accordance with the Practitioners' Guide and we therefore would have expected Assertion 1 to have been answered 'No' on the 2025/26 Annual Governance Statement. We would expect the affected figures to be restated in the 2025 column of the 2026/27 AGAR and suitably disclosed as restated to bring the matter to the attention of the reader.

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

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	External Auditor Signature	Date
MOORE	Moore	26/08/2026