

Final External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/24 in respect of KIRKHAM TOWN COUNCIL – LA0119

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 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2023/24

On 29 September 2024, we issued a report detailing the results of our limited assurance review of Sections 1 and 2 of this authority's Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024. We explained that we were unable to certify completion of the review at that time. We are now in a position to certify completion of the review.

The external auditor report given in Section 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return requires amendments as follows:

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 has not been approved in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The date/minute references indicate Section 2 was approved before Section 1, however there are minutes from the meeting where the AGAR was approved to enable us to verify the order of approval was correct.

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:

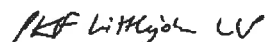
- Information received from the smaller authority indicates that assets purchased during both the current and prior year have not been included in Section 2, Box 9. The Practitioners' Guide (the Guide) states that smaller authorities 'need to apply a reasonable approach to asset valuation which is consistent from year to year'. Under this range of possible approaches, all assets are expected to carry some value, no matter how small. The smaller authority should therefore reconsider the valuation policy for all fixed assets and draw up a policy to be approved by the authority and recorded in both the authority's minutes and in the asset register. When submitting the 2024/25 AGAR, the smaller authority should ensure that the 2023/24 comparative figure in Box 9 is restated for consistency and comparability.

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

None

External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.



PKF Littlejohn LLP

30/09/2024

Kirkham Town Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Section 16 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

	Notes
<p>1. The audit of accounts for Kirkham Town Council for the year ended 31 March 2024 has been completed and the accounts have been published.</p>	<p>This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website. The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.</p>
<p>2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return including the auditor's certificate and opinion is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Kirkham Town Council on application to:</p>	
<p>(a) <u>ELIZABETH SQUIRES, TOWN CLERK</u> <u>KIRKHAM TOWN COUNCIL</u> <u>MILL STREET</u> <u>KIRKHAM PR4 2AN</u></p>	<p>(a) Insert the name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR</p>
<p>(b) <u>The Community Centre is open</u> <u>between the hours of 8.00-12.00</u> <u>noon, Monday to Friday.</u></p>	<p>(b) Insert the hours during which inspection rights may be exercised</p>
<p>3. Copies will be provided to any local government elector of the area on payment of £ <u>5</u> (c) for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.</p>	<p>(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs</p>
<p>Announcement made by: (d) <u>ELIZABETH SQUIRES</u> <u>TOWN CLERK/RFO</u></p>	<p>(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice</p>
<p>Date of announcement: (e) <u>9 OCTOBER 2024</u></p>	<p>(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice</p>



Ms Liz Squires
Kirkham Town Council
The Community Centre
Mill Street
KIRKHAM
Lancashire
PR4 2AN

Our ref LA0119
SAAA Ref SB04939
Invoice No. SB20243225
VAT No. GB 440 4982 50
Email: sba@pkf-l.com
Date: 30 September 2024

INVOICE

Professional services rendered in connection with the following:

Limited assurance review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2024	£840.00
Additional charges (where applicable) as detailed on attached appendix A	£0.00
Additional fees (where applicable) as detailed by separate cover	£0.00
TOTAL NET	£840.00
VAT @ 20%	£168.00
TOTAL PAYABLE	£1,008.00

THIS IS A STATUTORY FEE WHICH MUST BE PAID. PAYMENT IS DUE ON RECEIPT OF INVOICE

The fees and charges are in accordance with the fee scales set by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd which can be found at <https://www.saaa.co.uk/audit-fees/>

**For payments by cheque, please return the remittance advice with your payment to:
PKF Littlejohn LLP, Credit Control (SBA), 5th Floor, 15 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London E14 4HD**

For payments by credit transfer, our bank details are:-

HSBC Bank plc
Address: 1-3 Bishopsgate, London, EC2N 3AQ
Sort Code: 40-02-31
Account number: 11070797
Account Name: PKF Littlejohn LLP
Please include LA0119 or Kirkham Town Council as the reference.

For account queries, contact sba@pkf-l.com

PKF Littlejohn LLP
15 Westferry Circus,
Canary Wharf, London
E14 4HD

T: +44 (0)20 7516 2200
www.pkf-l.com

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

KIRKHAM 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 2024, 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.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
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.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
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.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>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.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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:

27/06/2024



and recorded as minute reference:

24/06/05b

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

Chair

Clerk

www.kirkhamcouncil.co.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

KIRKHAM TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	379,035	391,364	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	232,527	234,984	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	74,805	74,853	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	33,784	47,596	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	800	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	260,419	305,455	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	391,364	348,150	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	393,575	327,588	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	39,269	39,269	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	800	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 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 27/06/2024

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

27/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

24/06/03b

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



Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

Kirkham Town Council - LA0119

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.

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2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

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Please see below

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

The smaller authority has submitted its AGAR and supporting documentation prior to 30 September 2024; however, we have not been able to complete our review work in time to enable to smaller authority to publish the required documentation in line with statutory requirements. Once we have completed our review a final report will be provided with the certificate of completion detailing any qualifications and 'other' matters.

Our fee note for the limited assurance review will be issued when we certify completion.

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

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 2024.

We do not certify completion because:

We have not been able to complete our review work in time to enable to smaller authority to publish the required documentation in line with statutory requirements.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

27/09/2024

