

# Bentham Town Council

## Notice of conclusion of audit

### Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2021

Sections 20 (2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014  
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

1. The audit of accounts for **Bentham Town Council** for the year ended 31 March 2021 has been completed and the accounts have been published.
2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of **Bentham Town Council** on application to:
  - a. Christine Downey, Town Clerk, Bentham Town Hall, Station Road, High Bentham, LA2 7LH.
  - b. Monday to Thursday 9am to 4pm by appointment, telephone 015242 62587.
3. Copies will be provided to any person on payment of 60p for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.

Announcement made by: ..........Town Clerk

Date of announcement: 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

# Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

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 2021, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:	
	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. <b>FIRST NO WORKING DAYS OF JULY 2020 NOT INCLUDED DUE TO</b>	
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. <b>PANDEMIC</b>	
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	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
			✓	

\*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:

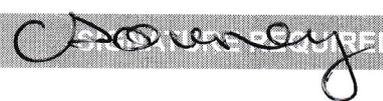
05/07/2021

and recorded as minute reference:

88.7 MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman  SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk  SIGNATURE REQUIRED

<https://www.benthamtowncouncil.co.uk> AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

*Gareth L. Bennett*  
 YORKSHIRE INTERNAL  
 AUDIT SERVICES  
 25/06/2021

BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	
1. Balances brought forward	87,231	75,959	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	106,447	105,630	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	26,283	31,620	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	43,089 <i>RESTATED</i>	38,464	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	100,913 <i>RESTATED</i>	85,322	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	75,959	89,423	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	75,959	89,423	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	681,872	724,129	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	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 2021 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

*[Signature]*

Date

30/06/2021

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

05/07/2021

as recorded in minute reference:

88.8

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

*[Signature]*

### Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL – NY0057**

#### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

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 2021; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

#### 2 External auditor report 2020/21

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 smaller authority failed to approve the AGAR in time to publish it before 1 July 2021, the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and did not disclose this by answering 'No' to Section 1, Box 1.

Information has come to our attention from the internal auditor highlighting the fact that Sections 1 & 2 of the audited 2019/20 AGAR and Notice of conclusion of audit were not published on the authority's website by the dates specified in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

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

We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2021/22 for the exercise of public rights, since the period for the exercise of public rights did not include the first 10 working days of July. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2022/23.

The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance assertion in Section 1, Box 4, and has provided the explanation that this was because the public rights dates in the prior year did not include the first 10 working days of July. However, Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as amended by SI 2020/404 the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 did not require the public rights period in respect of the year ended 31 March 2020 to include the first 10 working days of July. Therefore, the smaller authority could have ticked 'Yes' to this assertion.

#### 3 External auditor certificate 2020/21

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 2021.

External Auditor Name

**PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP**

External Auditor Signature

*PKF Littlejohn LLP*

Date

**23/09/2021**

\* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))