

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 26th June 2019 at 7.00pm at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood.

PRESENT: Cllr Tony Ring, Town Mayor
Cllr Philip Day, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Andy Briers
Cllr Rae Frederick
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Jeremy Heron
Cllr Darren Loose
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Steve Rippon-Swaine
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Mrs Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
Cllr Michael Thierry, County and District Councillor

ABSENT: Cllr Gareth Deboos
Cllr Hilary Edge
Cllr Christine Ford
Cllr Peter Kelleher

C/6316 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Sue Scott, Co-Chair of Ringwood and Bransgore Dementia Action Group addressed the Council regarding its Dementia Friendly status, and encouraged all new Members to attend a dementia awareness session, date to be arranged.

Angela Wiseman asked the Council to consider adopting an environmental policy. She said that sustainability was an issue of great concern to residents, and felt that the Council should take a lead on bringing about change. Angela Wiseman asked that this be put forward as an agenda item for the next full council meeting.

C/6317 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Deboos, Edge, Ford and Kelleher.

C/6318 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none declared at this time.

C/6319 PRESENTATION OF GRANT AID CHEQUE

The Town Mayor presented a grant aid cheque of £1,000 to Clare Adams, Deputy Headteacher at Ringwood School, to support the School's 60th Birthday Festival event.



C/6320
LAND NORTH OF HIGHTOWN ROAD

There were approximately 30 members of public in attendance for this item.

Members received a presentation from Jane Piper (planning consultant) regarding proposals by Taylor Wimpey for land north of Hightown Road. They were in the process of preparing an outline planning application to include 400 new homes, 3 hectares of employment, open space and new accesses.

It was explained that the site is allocated in the District Council's emerging Local Plan (currently undergoing Examination by Planning Inspectors) and that, although the policy allows for at least 270 homes, the Council is under pressure to optimise use of brownfield sites and to bring forward more new houses, and has stated that it would welcome an increase in numbers if it can be demonstrated that the development is appropriate and policy compliant.

The policy requires that the development includes a community focal point and suggestions were invited from local people.

The scheme as designed would be for 400 homes and this would include 200 affordable homes and in line with policy 70% would be for social rent and 30% shared ownership. However, Taylor Wimpey was open to discussion with the Town Council on the mix of housing and it might be possible to provide some discounted market housing and more starter homes.

In response to questions raised, the following points were noted:

- The total build period for 400 homes would be 5 to 6 years.
- A construction methodology would be included with the planning application (to address routes for construction vehicles, time of work, storage of materials, parking on site, dust and noise etc.)
- Taylor Wimpey was made aware that work was due to commence in March 2021 on the A31 widening – the implications of this on the start of work on site would need to be considered.
- The open space would remain as such in perpetuity.
- A drainage strategy would be part of the planning application, and would address any potential flooding issues.
- In terms of the ecology of the site, a site survey looking at protected species (usually carried out over the period of a year) would be submitted, together with a biodiversity statement and a Habitats Regulations assessment. This would ensure that the development was appropriate and would provide information on negating the impact of development and enhancing the area for the future.
- Site assessments and studies were being carried out, including transport/access, landscape, ecology, noise, air quality, heritage and drainage mitigation.

Residents were invited to attend a public exhibition in The Tithe Barn at The Elm Tree from 3pm to 8pm on Wednesday 3rd July, where they would be able to speak to members of the Taylor Wimpey team. A website would go live after the exhibition.

**C/6321
MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 15th May 2019, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

**C/6322
RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Cllr Briers presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meetings held on 15th May and 5th June 2019.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meetings held on 15th May and 5th June 2019 be received.

**C/6323
PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Day presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meetings held on 15th May and 7th June 2019.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meetings held on 15th May and 7th June 2019 be received.

**C/6324
STAFFING COMMITTEE**

Cllr Day presented the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 19th June 2019.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 19th June 2019 and the recommendation therein be approved.

**C/6325
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Cllr Heron presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 15th May and 19th June 2019.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 19th June 2019 be received.

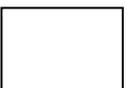
**C/6326
ANNUAL RETURN**

Members considered the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year ended 31st March 2019 (*Annex A*), as recommended for approval by Policy & Finance Committee (*F/5693 refers*).

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19 be received and noted.
- 2) That the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 be approved.
- 3) That the Accounting Statements 2018/19 be approved.

ACTION R Fitzgerald



C/6327
ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report (*Annex B*).

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Annual Town Assembly and Annual Council Meeting be held on two separate dates in future.
- 2) That the Annual Town Assembly be held on 13 May 2020, and a guest speaker be invited to attend.
- 3) That Community Awards be re-introduced to the Annual Town Assembly, with nominations invited from local residents.

ACTION C Wilkins / J Hurd

C/6328
NEW FOREST BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Heron and Ring be appointed to represent the Council at a meeting of the New Forest Business Partnership at Greyfriars on 11th July 2019 (3:30-5:30pm).

ACTION C Wilkins

C/6329
COMMUNICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED

The Town Mayor reported the following:

- 1) He invited Members to attend the Armed Forces Day Church Service at 2.30pm on Sunday 30th June.
- 2) Although the Twinning Association would visit Pont Audemer in 2020, from now the Association would be live but not active.
- 3) He had met with Inspector Scott Beney to discuss various policing issues. He encouraged Members and residents to sign up to Hampshire Alert, to improve the flow of information between the community and the police (<https://www.hampshirealert.co.uk/>).
- 4) NFDC was looking to provide up to 25 new/replacement litter bins in the town.

C/6330
REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS AND STUDENT ADVISORS

Cllr Day reported that the spray can used to graffiti the wall in Northumberland Lane had now been collected by the Police to assess its suitability for forensic submission. He advised that the next Litter Pick would be on 7th July, meeting any time between 8am and 10.30am at the Scout Hut in Poulner. He thanked everyone who had provided information for the Council's statement for the Local Plan Examination on 15th July.

Cllr O'Reilly had attended the South West Quadrant meeting with Cllr Deboos and reported on a new Professional Dog Walkers' Charter, and the availability of grant funding available to ascertain a housing needs assessments. She had also attended the Western Escarpment meeting, also with Cllr Deboos. Following on from Councillor Heron's report to the Recreation Meeting about Ash Die Back, she was concerned about Ash Die Back disease and wonders what councillors can do to make the public aware of the problem. She is also concerned

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about phosphates and chemicals in the rivers, and was advised to provide further information should she wish these issues to be considered by Committee. She wished to thank a group of Ringwood School students who had assisted her to stand a vandalised bin back up in Pocket Park.

Cllr Frederick advised she would be attending the Litter Pick on 7th July. She had been approached by someone with an interest in street art and who would be talking to Ringwood School about the A31 underpass. She had attended a Ringwood Society meeting, and they were supportive of schemes such as Clean Up Ringwood and Transition Ringwood.

C/6331

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Thierry provided a written report, which was circulated at the meeting (*Annex C*).

District Councillor Heron outlined the agenda for Cabinet on 3rd July. The Council would be considering a draft Compulsory Purchase and Overriding Easements Policy, which would assist with bringing forward sites for new housing. It was also noted that the Council would be supporting Southampton City Council's bid to be the UK City of Culture 2025.

District Councillor Rippon-Swaine reported that, in response to a motion that the Council declare a Climate Emergency, a Task and Finish Group had been set up to investigate and report back by September. A Task and Finish Group had been set up to consider a strategy in response to Ash Die Back, with a proposal to plant 2 trees for every 1 lost.

C/6332

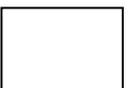
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 3 rd July 2019
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 5 th July 2019
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 17 th July 2019
<i>SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING</i>	<i>7.00pm</i>	<i>Wednesday 24th July 2019 (tentative)</i>
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 31 st July 2019

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.53pm.

APPROVED
31st July 2019

TOWN MAYOR



To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with Proper Practices.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **annual internal audit report** is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2019**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both):
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2019
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the review and is able to give an opinion on the limited assurance review, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2019 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2018/19**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2018/19**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2019 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 & 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

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Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (i.e. no empty highlighted boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the Annual Governance and Accountability Return contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible prior to approving the annual governance statement and before approving the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both).
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2018) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2019).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2019**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation provided?	✓	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been provided?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2019 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

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RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation **during** the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

The internal audit for 2018/19 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2017/18, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. ("Not Covered" should only be ticked where the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2017/18 AGAR)			✓
L. During summer 2018 this authority has correctly provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			Not applicable ✓
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
	✓		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

07 05 19 08 05 19 09 05 19

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

NIGEL SPRINGS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Nigel Springs

Date

30 05 19

*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

We acknowledge as the members of:

Ringwood 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 2019, 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.	✓		<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 <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>
		✓	

*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 should be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

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

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19 for

Ringwood Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2018 £	31 March 2019 £	
1. Balances brought forward	423,196	496,936	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	468,223	485,196	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	232,024	264,272	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	-385,755	-421,779	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-31,546	-31,546	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	-209,207	-299,544	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	496,936	493,535	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	533,409	536,019	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	3,667,439	3,718,186	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	407,260	388,754	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.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2019 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

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

as recorded in minute reference:

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

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2018/19

In respect of Ringwood Town Council

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 2019; 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 2018/19

(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 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. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2018/19

We certify/do not 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 2019.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

*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)

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2019

YEAR ENDED 31/03/2018			YEAR ENDED 31/03/2019	
£	£		£	£
		<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
8,667		Prepayments	9,101	
31,285		Trade Debtors	23,311	
0		VAT Reimbursable	3,409	
0		Short Term Investments	350,000	
533,409		Cash in Hand and at Bank	186,019	
0		Purchase Tax	0	
	573,362	Total Assets		571,839
		<u>LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
6,278		Receipts In Advance	8,018	
57,977		Trade Creditors	56,331	
-337		Trade Creditors Control Account	-185	
0		VAT Payable	0	
12,508		Deposits	14,141	
	76,426	Total Liabilities		78,304
		TOTAL NET ASSETS		493,535
	496,936	REPRESENTED BY:		
		Balance - General Fund		280,955
	299,240	Earmarked Reserves & Provisions		212,580
	197,695	TOTAL EQUITY		493,535
	496,936			

I certify that the above balance sheet, and the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2019, presents fairly the financial position of this Council.

Signed _____ Responsible Finance Officer

Date _____

Signed _____ Town Mayor

Date _____

ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY

1. The Annual Town Assembly is a meeting of the electorate and not a meeting of the Town Council, and must take place between 1 March and 1 June each year.
2. The Annual Meeting of the Council must take place in May.
3. For the past few years the Annual Town Assembly and the Annual Council Meeting have been held on the same evening. This has meant that the Town Assembly has been a bit of a non-event; little more than a run through of the Mayor's and Committee Chairmen's Annual Reports and an update on the financial status of the Ringwood United Charities. These meetings have been poorly attended by members of the public.
4. Up until 2007, the Annual Town Assembly always included a presentation from a guest speaker. Previous speakers have included students from Ringwood School speaking about Fair Trade and the Future of Ringwood; a representative from the Environment Agency speaking about the Flood Defence Scheme; and the Reserves Officer from Blashford Lakes. Refreshments were then served at the end of the meeting.
5. Agendas for previous meetings have also included Community Awards (bi-annually). Nominations were sought from the local community through the local press, with awards being agreed by the Council and then presented by the Town Mayor at the Annual Town Assembly.
6. The current schedule of meetings, agreed by Policy & Finance Committee (*F/5650 – 16/01/2019 refers*), shows both meetings being held on 20 May 2020. However, it is proposed that these meetings should be held on separate dates in future, to allow more to be made of the Annual Town Assembly, as has happened in the past.
7. There are four Wednesday evenings within the period outlined in paragraph 1 when no other meeting is planned. If members agree to separate the two meetings, the Annual Town Assembly could therefore be held on either 11 March, 8 or 22 April or 13 May 2020, with the Annual Council Meeting being held on 20 May 2020 as planned.
8. **Issues for Decision**
 - 8.1 ***Should the Annual Town Assembly and Annual Council Meeting be held on two separate dates in future?***
 - 8.2 ***If so, which date should the Annual Town Assembly be held on in 2020 – 11 March, 8 or 22 April, or 13 May?***
 - 8.3 ***Should Community Awards be re-introduced to the Annual Town Assembly, with nominations invited from local residents?***
 - 8.4 ***Should a guest speaker be invited to make a presentation at the Annual Town Assembly and, if so, do Members have any suggestions?***

For further information, please contact:

Mrs Jo Hurd
Deputy Town Clerk
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Balancing the County Budget consultation

Hampshire County Council is asking for residents' views on ways to balance its budget, in response to growing demands on council. The consultation is open until 11.59pm on Wednesday 17th July 2019. The County Council would like to hear views on the following options for balancing its budget, as well as any alternatives that you may wish to propose:

- i Introducing and increasing charges for some services
- i Encouraging central Government to make legislative changes
- i Generating additional income
- i Continuing to use the County Council's reserves prudently
- i Reducing and changing services Increasing Council Tax

The Information Pack and Response Form can be requested in other formats including Braille, audio or large print by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk or calling 0300 555 1375. You can also email your response directly to insight@hants.gov.uk

Motion on Declaring a Climate Emergency

A number of councils have had Motions related to climate change laid before them. Both New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council are two such councils.

The county response was discussed at the last Cabinet Meeting.

- i It was noted that whilst the UK only accounts for a very small proportion of global carbon emissions (around 1.5%) it is essential that developed countries like the UK show leadership internationally.

- i Hampshire County Council has taken an innovative and robust approach to reducing our own carbon emissions since Cabinet approved a strategic plan in July 2010. Over the last nine years a significant reduction of over 40% has been successfully achieved. Having originally set stretching targets of 20% reduction by 2015 and then 40% by 2025 excellent progress has been made.

- i The carbon emissions of the County Council have reduced by 21,800 tonnes since 2010 - equivalent to planting a forest of trees covering 8,700 acres or 4,300 football pitches. In Phase one of the plan total gross energy cost savings of nearly £30 million were delivered including leading work with all schools to reduce energy consumption.

- i Converting all street lights to modern energy efficient lamps and introducing a programme of dimming and switching off.

- i Converting the County Councils small vehicle fleet from fossil fuel to electric

- i Installing solar panels on all roofs in our corporate estate that are technically viable - some 60 installations in total

- i Reducing our office estate by around 25% as a result of flexible working and more efficient occupation

Cllr Keith Mans noted "The Cabinet declares a 'Climate Emergency' in line with the action taken by many other Councils and organisations in the UK and globally, and commits to develop an action plan to provide a meaningful and effective set of measures to ensure that Hampshire moves towards carbon.

Contacting Ringwood County Councillor – Please contact Michael Thierry 07702 479095 – email Michael.Thierry@hants.gov.uk