

BICKENHILL & MARSTON GREEN PARISH COUNCIL (WA0029)

Notes to accompany Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

Question 4

We have answered no to this question because, on the External Auditor report 2019/20 under “Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority”, an ‘other’ matter was listed as shown below:

We note that Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return were approved on 10/06/2020 but that the public rights period did not commence until 01/09/2020. The period set is not strictly in contravention of the timing permitted under the legislation introduced as a result of Covid-19, but it should be noted that this year’s extension to allow later public inspection was intended to allow for authorities who were not able to approve their AGAR until as late as the statutory deadline of 31 August 2020. Regulation 12 (3) of the Accounts and Audit Regs 2015 (signing and approval of the statement of accounts for Category 2 authorities) requires the Responsible Financial Officer, as soon as practicable after the date on which the authority complies with regulation 12 (2c) (re. accounts approved and signed following meeting), to do the following on behalf of the smaller authority:

a) commence the period for the exercise of public rights in accordance with regulation 14 and regulation 15; and

b) notify the local auditor of the date on which that period was so commenced.

We fully appreciate the difficulties arising as a result of coronavirus restrictions; however, please consider the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, when setting the date for the approval of the AGAR in relation to the public rights period in future years