Appendix 1

This assessment seeks to confirm that the company has suitable governance and internal control arrangements in place in order to provide assurance to the Shareholer Board

There are 11 sections covering the following;

Section 1 - Company Operation
Section 2 - Roles and Behaviours of company Directors
Section 3 - Board Composition, Skills & Development
Section 4 - Role of the Board Chair
Section 5 - Roles and Behaviours of the Board
Section 6 - Role of Executive & Non-Executive Directors
Section 7 - Business Planning
Section 8 - Financial Management
Section 9 - Risk Management
Section 10 - Ethical Conduct
Section 11 - Performance Management

Each section contains a number of statements and your assessment should state confirm whether or not the company, to the best of the Board's knowledge, is compliant with each statement by answering yes or no. If you do not feel the statement applies, you can respond with N/A

You are required to list the evidence that may be available to support your conclusions e.g. Board meeting minutes, available policies/procedures, declarations of interest. This evidence may be requested by internal audit as part of an independent validation of the self assessment and they can also be consulted on what evidence may be suitable if this is unclear.

Where a response of 'No' or 'N/A' is provided, you should advise in the exemption note column what action is being taken to lead to compliance with the statement or the reason the statement does not apply and you are therefore exempt from providing evidence.

The assessment may be completed by any officer of the company but must be approved by the Board and signed by the Chair.

Annual Assurance Statement [financial year]: [Insert Company Name]

This statement on behalf of the Board outlines the results of a self-assessment acknowledging the company's responsibility in delivering practices that promote proper systems of governance and internal control, and that these are followed and maintained.

The Board acknowledges its responsibility in ensuring that company policies and procedures are followed, and that proper systems of governance and internal control are maintained in all business areas. This responsibility incorporates the requirement to monitor and review the operation of these systems as part of the council's risk management processes.

In completing this exercise, it is acknowledged that appropriate governance and internal controls can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or will be detected within a timely period.

The information provided in this document is given to the best of our knowledge and belief in connection with the company's business activities.

Officer completing this statement:	Andrew Coles / Andy Mann
Job Title:	Business Innovation Manager / Partnership Director
Date Completed:	25/11/2024

Date approved by Board:	03.03.25
Signature of Board Chair:	A.Bryan

1. Company Operation

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
1.1	The company operates in line with the rules agreed by the shareholders, directors and the company secretary, in the Articles of Association	**Yes**	Evidence Companies House	
1.2	Any changes to the operating model of the company are discussed with the board and shareholders, with the Articles of Association reviewed and updated accordingly.	**Yes**	1/2 Yearly Stategic joint meetngs Buisness Plan	
1.3	There is a record of the essential functions and other matters which are reserved for board decision and cannot be delegated.	**Yes**	Sitting within Company overarching contract and registered with Companies House for Company 085 and 086.	

2. Role and Behaviours of Company Directors				
Ref	**Responsibility**	**Confirmed**	**Evidence to support conclusion**	**Exception Notes**
2.1	Directors act in accordance with the seven Nolan Principles: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership.	**Yes**	No Actions against company or board indicate positive alignment	
2.2	Directors act within the remit of their powers.	**Yes**	Neither Shareholder has raised any concerns, and all decisions have multiple sign off.	
2.3	Directors promote the success of the company.	**Yes**	IMS External audits remort very positive management drive for continuous improvement and growth.	
2.4	Directors exercise independent judgement.	**Yes**	Open communication and records of board meetings demonstrate all director unvolvement and judgements	
2.5	Directors exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence.	**Yes**	Company annual management review supports demonstration of diligence	
2.6	Directors avoid conflicts of interest	**Yes**	All Medway Norse staff are contracted to comply with the Norse Code of behaviour which has clear guidelines and rules on Conflicts of interest, Gifts and hosopitality and bribery	
2.7	Directors do not accept benefits from third parties	**Yes**	As 2.6	
2.8	Directors declare interests in any proposed transactions or arrangements within the company	**Yes**	As 2.6	

3. Board Composition, Skills & Development

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
3.1	The board includes a range of skills and backgrounds including commercial, financial, business development, technical, legal and HR experience	**Yes**		
3.2	Appointments to the Board have been subject to formal selection processes.	**Yes**	Norse Board membership is periodically assigned by Norse Group.	
3.3	Board composition is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	**Yes**	As both shareholders review or change structures the board is structured to suit. Over 11 years the board membership has been adjusted many times.	
3.4	Board members have received appropriate training in relation to their legal roles and responsibilities, including those under the: - Companies Act 2006, - Insolvency Act 1986, - Bribery Act 2010, - Modern Slavery Act 2015, - Data Protection Act 2018, and - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974	**Yes**	All board members have legal council in addition to their own personal training, induction and experience.	
3.5	There are annual evaluations of Board and Chair performance, with recommendations for additional training as necessary.	**Yes**	Pre and Post every board meeting a review and adjustment of agenda is carried out along with individual performance.	

4. Role of the Board Chair				
Ref	**Responsibility**	**Confirmed**	**Evidence to support conclusion**	**Exception Notes**
4.1	The Chair acts in accordance with the seven Nolan Principles: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership.	**Yes**	No Actions against company or board indicate positive alignment	
4.2	The Chair formulates the Board Strategy and ensures relevant issues are on the agenda.	**Yes**	Minutes and signoff of agenda	
4.3	The Chair ensures all Executive and Non-Executive Directors are enabled to contribute to Board activities.	**Yes**	Minutes demonstrate inclusion and number of additional meetings within the year	
4.4	The Chair ensures that the Board is in full control of the company's activities.	**Yes**	Reliant on information supplied to board via Management review and external IMS audits	
4.5	The Chair promotes the effective & efficient use of staff and resources.	**Yes**	In conjunction with operational teams and demonstrated via KPI's	
4.6	The Chair ensures delivery of high standards of integrity and propriety in company activity.	**Yes**	See 4.5	

5. Roles and Behaviours of the Board

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
5.1	The Board operates openly and transparently.	**Yes**	The board meets quarterly with a formal board report distributed prior to the meeting. Minutes of the meeting are also recorded and distributed.	
5.2	The Board meets regularly, with due notice of the issues to be discussed supported by the necessary paperwork, and retains a record of all matters discussed and conclusions reached.	**Yes**	As 5.1	
5.3	The Board promotes the success of the company by directing and supervising the company’s affairs	**Yes**	Promotes 5 year business plan which includes commercial growth.	
5.4	The Board provides entrepreneurial leadership within prudent and effective controls, where risk is assessed and managed	**Yes**	Control via the management review process and reporting quarterly at board level which includes the risk register	
5.5	The Board sets strategic aims and ensures sufficient resources (financial and human) are available to meet objectives	**Yes**	New and changes to business pass through a hirearchical approval process according to value.	
5.6	The Board reviews management performance	**Yes**	KPI's that are common to all departments (Level One) and sevice specific (Level Two) have been identified and are monitored and reviewed monthly.	
5.7	The Board sets corporate values and standards	**Yes**	Medway Norse adopts Norse Group policies which include values, behavoirs, Standards and codes of conduct. All staff are advised of such policies and expected to act within them.	
5.8	The Board ensures obligations to shareholders and others are met	**Yes**	Obligations to shareholders are clearly identified and reported via liason board and are detailed to service level.	
5.9	The Board has processes to ensure that the entity continues to be financially viable, supported by the role of its external auditor.	**Yes**	Board reports including the current financial position are produced and presented to shareholders on a quarterly basis	
5.10	The Board has processes in place to deal with financial issues, including business planning, budget control, financial systems and financial monitoring and reporting.	**Yes**	Business planning is carried out using various mechanisms including the Medway Norse 5 Year plan. All budget control, monitoring and reporting is carried out using a digital finance platform "Sharpalite" and is monitored both locally and at group and with the help of a dedicated accountant.	
5.11	The Board undertakes in-depth consideration of company matters that are deemed significant, including new projects, exiting projects, approvals and endorsement of advice	**Yes**	Significat company matters are discussed at board and go through a management of change process	
5.12	The Board ensures that workforce policies and practices are consistent with the company’s values and support its long-term sustainable success.	**Yes**	Medway Norse adopts Norse Group policies and procedures which include values, behavoirs, Standards and codes of conduct. All staff are advised of such policies and expected to act within them.	

6. Role of Executive & Non-Executive Directors

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
6.1	Executive & Non-Executive Directors act in accordance with the seven Nolan Principles: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership.	**Yes**	No evidence to the contrary	
6.2	Executive Directors implement the Boards plans and policies.	**Yes**	Evidence of the implementation of the boards plans are clearly reported through liason and main board reports and action logs	
6.3	Non-Executive Directors challenge and contribute to the development of the company's strategy.	**Yes**	Open questioning and evaluation of report at board level evidenced by minutes of such.	
6.4	Non-Executive Directors monitor reporting of performance and scrutinise performance of management in meeting agreed goals.	**Yes**	As 6.4	
6.5	Non-Executive Directors satisfy themselves on the accuracy of financial information and that financial controls and risk management are robust and defensible	**Yes**	Full access to accounts information is provided to all Dorectors and further information provided when requested.	
6.6	Non-Executive Directors determine executive directors' remuneration and have a prime role in appointing/removing senior management	**N/A**		Not current process

7. Business Planning

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
7.1	The company has a documented business plan, setting out it's objectives and how these are to be resourced and achieved.	**Yes**	Medway Norse has produced a five year business plan which has been presented to Medway Council in November 2024	
7.2	A business planning process is undertaken at least annually, which considers; - The core business offering and potential future services/innovations. - strategy and implementation, underpinned by effective marketing, communications, and branding strategies - financial break-even analysis, projected surplus or deficit, cash flow, balance sheet and reliance on trading income - operations and management (analysis of capacity and capabilities to fulfil its purpose, workforce planning, board development, support services, managing the supply chain and clients) - market analysis of trends and competitors.	**Yes**	Business plans are reviewed at least annually and additional analysis made at department level as required. Market trend data is provided by the Norse group business development team	

8. Financial Management

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
8.1	The company has an independent financial status from the council, including separate bank accounts and designated signatories.	**Yes**	Separate bank accounts from Medway Council are held and audit by PWC annually	
8.2	The company has a set of documented financial policies and procedures	**Yes**	Medway Norse have adopted all Norse group policies	These policies have not been reviewed in the last 5 years
8.3	The financial implications, particularly Value for Money, are assessed in all decisions that are made.	**Yes**	As part of management of change processs, all financial implications are assessed.	
8.4	There are controls in place to ensure that: - charges are levied at the appropriate level/rates, - all income is collected, or pursued in instances of non-payment, - where possible payment is collected in advance of service delivery	**Yes**	Charge rates are set within SLA'a or contracts and charged appropriately. Standard payment terms is set at 30 days in arrears of invoice and age Dpt is reviewed each month at both local and Norse group level.	
8.5	There are controls in place to ensure that all expenditure is legitimate and properly authorised.	**Yes**	Expenditure is authorised in advance using digital supplier authorisation platform "QMS", digital order authorisation platform "Compleat", and capital expenditure procedure.	
8.6	There are controls in place to ensure that where required, assets are properly recorded on company inventory.	**Yes**	Assets recorded by individual departments and also using central asset register.	
8.7	All assets are appropriately safeguarded against theft or damage.	**Yes**	Damage is avoided where possible by written method statements, theft is where possible prevented using secure storage e.g. shipping containers, secure depots using security guards, cctv etc. and vehicles are alarmed and fitted with trackers.	
8.8	There is appropriate segregation of duties to reduce the risk of fraud.	**Yes**	See 8.5	
8.9	There are controls in place to ensure the accuracy and legitimacy of financial information held within the accounts, including review by qualified accountants	**Yes**	All expenditure and income is recorded using a digital finance platform "Sharpalite" and is monitored both locally and at group and with the help of a dedicated accountant.	
8.10	Board reports clearly outline the current financial position of the company in terms of its trading position (income and expenditure), liquidity (cash flow) and solvency (balance sheet).	**Yes**	Board reports including the current financial position are produced and presented to shareholders on a quarterly basis	

9. Risk Management

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
9.1	The board has agreed an approach to risk management that is proportionate to the company's operating model	**Yes**	Lopcal risk register, Group SHEQ Policy, Group SHEQ department, Written RAMS & COSHH assessments, Hold and compliance to ISO 9001, 14001 & 45001	
9.2	The board has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate risk management arrangements are in place	**Yes**	As 9.1	
9.3	There is a documented register outlining key risks and mitigating controls	**Yes**	As 9.1	
9.4	The board regularly reviews risks and how they are being managed	**Yes**	As 9.1	

10. Ethical Conduct

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
10.1	All officers and Directors are aware of and uphold company's values and behaviours.	**Yes**	Medway Norse adopts Norse Group policies which include values, behavoirs, and codes of conduct. All staff are advised of such policies and expected to act within them.	Non exectutive Directors are not required to comply with Norse Policies
10.2	All officers and Directors are aware of and comply with the company code of conduct.	**Yes**	As 10.1	
10.3	All officers and Directors carry out their duties in line with company policies.	**Yes**	As 10.1	
10.4	All decisions delegated to Directors/officers are exercised lawfully and that they are intra vires.	**Yes**	Powers/responsibilities of employees, and professional standards are set out within Medway Norse "Operational Documents" and relevent legislation recorded via central register	
10.5	Arrangements are in place to ensure all Directors and officers abide by relevant professional standards.	**Yes**	As 10.4	
10.6	Employees are encouraged to report concerns around unethical, or potentially illegal, behaviour and have clear routes to raise such concerns. E.g. if they are unclear of the lawfulness of a proposed decision, or decision taken.	**Yes**	Initial route is direct to their line manager/director or if appropriate, in line with Group Whistleblowing Policy/procedure	

11. Performance Management

Ref	Responsibility	Confirmed	Evidence to support conclusion	Exception Notes
11.1	Available resources are planned, deployed, and monitored for the delivery of the company objectives.	**Yes**	Delivered by department with overview by local supervisors, managers, and directors	
11.2	The use of resources is kept under continuous review, with appropriate action taken to address any instances of ineffective, inefficient, and uneconomic use.	**Yes**	KPI's that are common to all departments (Level One) and sevice specific (Level Two) have been identified and are monitored and reviewed monthly.	
11.3	Key performance indicators and outputs are aligned with the objectives outlined in the business plan.	**Yes**	As 11.3	
11.4	Action plans are set for individual areas of business to assist with the achievement of key objectives.	**Yes**	All departments have written "Operating Documents" detailing all processes and responsibilites which include measures required to achieve key objectives	
11.5	All employees have periodic performance reviews with SMART objectives and targets that align with delivery of the business plan.	**Yes**	Directors and Managers have formal reviews that are recorded on a digital platform "Learning Hive". Supervisors and general assistants have informal reviews	