



Proper Officer, Sue Reid
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Bishop Monkton Parish Council Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BISHOP MONKTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD THURSDAY 15TH MAY 2025 IN THE METHODIST ROOM.

Commenced: 19.03 hours

Concluded: 20.44 hours

Attending: Cllrs Culshaw (Chairman), Oliver, Hogg, Goodier and Scales

Also Present: S Reid (Clerk) plus 1 member of the public.

Meetings are open to the press and public by virtue of the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960 (s1) unless the presence is prejudicial to the public interest (s2)

- 2025/064 To consider the nominations for the election of the role of Chairman of the Council and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**
RESOLVED Cllr Culshaw voted to be chairman for the forthcoming year 25/26
- 2025/065 To consider the nominations for the election of the role of Vice Chairman and to receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**
RESOLVED That members do not wish to have a position of Vice Chair.
- 2025/066 To receive the nominations for the election of 2 Parish Council members to represent the council on the Village Hall Managing Committee.**
RESOLVED That Cllrs Oliver and Hogg to be the representatives of the Village Hall Managing Committee.
- 2025/067 To receive the nominations for the election of 2 Parish Council members to represent the council at the YLCA Harrogate Branch Meetings.**
RESOLVED That Cllr Culshaw be the YLCA representative.
- 2025/068 To resolve that all agreed contractual payments be paid automatically by the RFO and detailed at the next available meeting for reference of members.**
RESOLVED That this is approved.

Signed_____

Dated_____



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- 2025/069** **To consider the councils policies (forwarded under separate cover) and agree to adopt for the forthcoming year.**
RESOLVED That all policies are adopted.
- 2025/070** **To agree the members of the Bishop Monkton Staffing Committee.**
RESOLVED That Cllrs Culshaw, Oliver and Goodier form the staffing committee members.
- 2025/071** **To approve the Terms of Reference of the Bishop Monkton Staffing Committee.**
RESOLVED That the Terms of Reference are approved.
- 2025/072** **Introduction from the Chairman and a reminder of the Council's expectations for the audio or visual recording of this meeting.**
In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, persons attending the meeting may record/film/photograph and make audio recordings or broadcast the proceedings of the formal Council meeting when the public and press are not lawfully excluded. This does not extend to live verbal commentary. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Parish Clerk who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.
The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
- 2025/073** **To receive any apologies.**
Apologies were received from Cllr Sargeson.
- 2025/074** **To consider the apologies and decide whether to approve reasons for absence.**
RESOLVED That Cllr Sargesons' apologies are accepted.
- 2025/075** **Declaration of Interests**
a) To receive any declarations of interest.
 No declarations of interest were received.

b) To receive, consider and decide upon any applications for dispensation .
 No applications for dispensation were received.
- 2025/076** **To approve the minutes of the Bishop Monkton Parish Council Ordinary Meeting held Tuesday 15th April 2025.**
RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 15th April are accepted as a true record of proceedings.
- 2025/077** **Public Participation**
To convene a public participation session to allow members of the public to make representation in respect of the business on the agenda. No resolutions can be made under public participation.
NOTE: The public participation session shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chairman and each member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes. A question at the meeting shall not require a response or debate during the meeting. The Chairman may direct that a written or oral response may be given.
• Cost of staffing in the previous financial year was queried against the prior year, as a member of the public deemed there to have been an increase of 80%. It was stated that there were various reasons for a significant increase;

Signed _____

Dated _____



levels of activity; the cost of a locum, contractual back pay and an increase in hours worked. The council noted it had also taken these factors into consideration for the 25/26 financial year, confirming that an increase in the standard hours was agreed, so as not to have a large amount of overtime hours incurred. Furthermore it was noted that while the 25/26 financial year is not expected to have the same levels of staffing costs, there is the increase in employers national insurance that needs to be taken into account.

- It was asked when the minutes of the last meeting would be available on the website. The member of the public was advised they were already posted on the website and had been for some 2 days prior to the meeting.
- It was asked if the meeting was been recorded and who kept any recordings and for how long.

2025/078 To receive a report from Cllr Nick Brown of North Yorkshire County Council.

Cllr Brown was not present and no report was presented.

2025/079 Clerk's report. To note the clerks report.
The clerks report was noted.

2025/080 Financial matters.

- a) To approve the payments as per the schedule attached.
RESOLVED That the payment are approved.
- b) To note the contracted ongoing payments.
The contracted payments were noted.
- c) To note the bank reconciliation.
There was no bank reconciliation due to the clerk still being in the process of setting the new accounts system up.

2025/081 Planning matters.

- a) To consider and make observations on the following planning applications.
There are no planning applications to consider.
- b) To note planning decisions.
The planning decisions were noted.
- c) To note planning enforcements.
There are no planning enforcements to note.

2025/082 Ongoing matters.

- a) To receive an update from Cllr Sargeson in relation to proposals for replacement equipment for the play area located at the playing fields.
RESOLVED To defer this item.
- b) To receive an update from Cllr Oliver on the replacement of certain street signs in the village.

Signed_____

Dated_____



Cllr Oliver reported that he has not received a response as yet.

RESOLVED To defer this item.

- c) To receive an update from Cllr Culshaw in relation to the plan to provide an item to celebrate the Coronation of HM King Charles III, namely the Coronation Walk including an update on Uredale Community Partnership and the application for funding for the Coronation Walk. and decide any action as appropriate.
Cllr Culshaw reported that the National trust have offered to walk the route to see if they can give help and advice.
- d) To receive an update from Cllr Oliver on highways matters, including traffic calming on Knaresborough Road and Moor Road, and consider any action required.
It was noted that the VAS units and Electric supply have been ordered.
- e) To receive an update from the clerk in relation to the Deed of Easement between Yorkshire Water, Kebble Homes and Bishop Monkton Parish Council.
See the clerk's report.
- f) For the council to receive an update on the planning application from Avant Homes.
RESOLVED That the clerk to chase this up and also send a copy Sir Alec Shelbrooke.
- g) For members to receive an update on grant funding applicable to the councils requirements.
The Clerk has circulated some availability. Cllr Scales to discuss with Cllr Sargeson and come back.
- h) For members to receive an update on the GAP Analysis in relation to the Local Council Awards Scheme and consider further actions.
The clerk to complete some information to allow this to progress.
- i) For members to receive an update on whether the fixed lighting has been repaired to enable the council to consider any further action to be taken in respect of other lighting that may be required. (Test Lighting)
The light has been inspected and it is faulty although this is partly down to the overhanging tree. As soon as tree is down it will be repaired.
- j) For members to receive an update on the request for provision of a litter bin to be located on the A61 at the top of Moor Road.
RESOLVED The clerk is dealing with this. To also include one for Mains Lane and end of Boroughbridge Road.
- k) To receive an update on the position relating to the Pinfold.
See the clerk's report.

2025/083 New matters and correspondence.

Signed _____

Dated _____



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- a) For members to receive the Internal Control check for the period to 1st January 2025 to 31st March 2025.
RESOLVED To Defer to next meeting.
- b) For members to note that Bishop Monkton Parish Council is not exempt from an external audit for the fiscal year 2024/2025.
This is noted.

It was noted that items c to f be deferred to the next meeting due to not having all information to hand.

- c) For members to note the Annual Internal Audit Report for the fiscal year 2024/2025 included at page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/2025.
- d) For members to approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement 2024/2025 for Bishop Monkton Parish Council on page 4 of the AGAR.
- e) For members to approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Report 2024/2025 for Bishop Monkton Parish Council on page 5 of the AGAR.
- f) For members to approve the publication of documents required by Account and Audit Regulations 2015, The Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- g) For members to consider the damage to the welcome sign on Moor Road and decide any action moving forwards.
RESOLVED That the clerk check the original supplier and cost from 2012. Members will then consider the options.
- h) For members to consider the proposal to move to digital access of the agenda for residents during council meetings. (See attached 2025/085 h)
RESOLVED To defer this item until all costings are available.
- i) To receive feedback from Cllr Goodier on his attendance at the training course 'Off to a Flying Start'.
Cllr Goodier gave a brief review of the course.

2025/084 To agree items to be communicated to residents, and the methods to be employed.

- Meeting which elected chair and adopted policies.
- Looking to try get extra waste/dog bins
- Positive feedback received from the Annual Parish Meeting.
- That the Council has a working group re Avant.
- That the VAS Signs have been purchased with support from the Village Hall committee.

2025/085 To notify the clerk of matters for inclusion on the agenda at the next meeting.

Signed _____

Dated _____



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- To discuss the pro's and cons of changing the name from parish to village council.
 - To organise a village 'clean the signs' day.

2025/086

The next Ordinary meeting of Bishop Monkton Parish Council will be held Tuesday 17th June 2025 in the Methodist Room. *The latest date for members to submit items for consideration on the agenda and reports on tasks is Monday 9th June 2025.*

Signed_____

Dated_____



The clerk reports the following for members to note:-

1. Documents have not yet been received back from the internal auditor, preventing the council from being able to approve the AGAR and supporting paperwork at the May Meeting. Whilst disappointing, this is acceptable as the deadline date for publication is 1st July 2025. The
2. The VAT reclaim monies in the sum of £1,470.09 have been received into the PC bank account.
3. The clerk has now received the codes needed to be able to reclaim VAT online in the future. The account has been set up and linked with the Government Gateway account set up by the clerk.
4. The clerk intends to submit the previous two years VAT claims also, as having read the advice we can go back three years.
5. The clerk has written to Farm and Land Services confirming the details of the contract for the forthcoming year 2025/2026.
6. There has been movement on the Deed of Easement. The PC and Kebble's solicitor appear to have agreed the discrepancy over the land and it has been sent to Yorkshire Waters Solicitor for their approval/comments. Providing everything is agreed the final draft of the deed should be with the PC soon for approval.
7. There has been no response in relation to the planning application from Avant Homes.
8. The clerk had her ID confirmed by a solicitor in relation to the ongoing matter for the Pinfold. All documents were then returned to the solicitor acting for the other party. This happened over two weeks ago. So far there has been no further communication.
9. The VAS Units and Electric supply to the post are ordered. The clerk to keep members informed of progress and potential install dates. If necessary, the installation of the VAS units will have to be delayed slightly until the electricity supply has been installed for the post.



Item 2025/080
Financial Matters

A – Financial Matters for Approval

[illegible]

B – To note the ongoing Contracted Payments

[illegible]

C – Bank Reconciliation – There is no bank reconciliation as the clerk is still in the process of setting up the new accounting system.

Mrs L Moss
c/o J C Trees Ltd
Mr James Clapperton
Ousebank Farm
Boroughbridge Road
Great Ouseburn
YO26 9TP
United Kingdom
Your Ref: PP-13856492

**NOTICE OF DECISION ON APPLICATION TO DO WORKS (FELL, TOP, LOP
ETC) TO TREE(S) SUBJECT TO A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER**

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PROPOSAL: Felling of 1no. Lawsons Cypress (G2) and 3no. Leylandii (G2) within Tree Preservation Order 35/2018 (T1, T2, T3, T4 on submitted plan).
LOCATION: 1 Red House Gardens Moor Road Bishop Monkton Harrogate North Yorkshire HG3 3QF
APPLICANT: Mrs L Moss

North Yorkshire Council being the Local Planning Authority for the purposes of the application received on 14 March 2025 for consent to carryout tree works, as described above, have resolved to
GRANT CONSENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS.

The conditions to which the permission is subject are as follows:

- 1 The proposed works shall be completed in accordance with the specification noted in the application.
- 2 All works shall be completed by a trained arborist who carries Public Liability Insurance with works in line with BS3998:2010.
- 3 Within the first planting season after the felling of the tree hereby approved, 2 no Rowan, 1 no Sorbus Aria White Beam and 1 no Flowering Cherry Kanzan shall be planted between November and March in accordance with the following:
 - Tree shall be planted within 1.5m of the felled tree;
 - Tree shall be of nursery stock size 10-12cm girth when measured at 1.5m from ground level at the point of planting;
 - Tree shall be planted in a prepared pit, which is 50% larger than the root ball of the tree;

- The sides of the planting to are to be forked over to help alleviate compaction and allow the tree roots to become established.
- Tree to be planted with the root collar at the same level as the surrounding soil levels;
- Tree to be backfilled with topsoil clean of building contaminants.
- Tree to be anchored with a single stake angled at 45% and attached the trunk of the tree at approx.1 metre above ground level. Stake to be driven into the ground clear of the root ball.
- Tree stock to be supplied in accordance with 'BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations'.

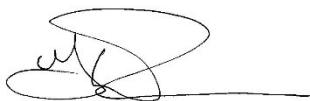
The Local Planning Authority shall be informed in writing once the tree has been planted.

- 4 If within a period of ten years from the date of the planting of any tree that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the local planning authority, seriously damaged or defective, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the local planning authority gives its written consent to any variation.

The reasons for the conditions are shown below:-

- 1 In order to maintain the amenity of the locality.
- 2 In order to maintain the amenity of the locality.
- 3 In the interests of good arboricultural practice.
- 4 To safeguard the rights of control by the Local Planning Authority in these respects and in the interests of amenity.

You can see the officer's report on the application at www.northyorks.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, you can contact Customer Services Tel No: 0300 131 2 131 or e-mail customerservices.har@northyorks.gov.uk.



Trevor Watson
Assistant Director – Planning

Date of Decision: 29 April 2025

YOUR RIGHTS OF APPEAL ARE AVAILABLE AT www.northyorks.gov.uk/planning

Date of Issue: 29 April 2025

IMPORTANT NOTES TO APPLICANT/AGENT:

If you are not the owner of the land on which the tree(s) subject of this decision relates, you may not lawfully carryout the consented works until you have obtained permission from all persons with a legal interest.

NOTE TO APPLICANT/AGENT: The Council posted a site notice publicising this application. If it is still on display, please remove it.

Decision No ZC25/00850/TPO

If you are aggrieved by the Council's decision an appeal may be made if the Council:

- a) refuses consent;
- b) grants consent subject to a conditions;
- c) refuses an application for any consent, agreement or approval required under the terms of a condition of consent, or grants it subject to conditions;
- d) fails to determine the application for consent within 8 weeks from the day after they received the application; or
- e) serves a tree replacement notice.

The appeal must be received by the Planning Inspectorate within 28 days of the date of notification of the authority's decision, or such later date as may be allowed, except:

- in relation to (d) above, where following the 8 weeks an appeal can be made at any time until the applicant is notified of the authority's decision, when the 28 day limit applies
- in relation to (e) above, where the appeal must be made before the tree replacement notice takes effect

If you want to appeal, you must do so by writing to:-

treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Environment Appeals
Room 3A Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

For further guidance on how to make an appeal please go to: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-decision-about-tree-order/how-to-appeal>

COMPENSATION

If you suffer any loss or damage which is caused or incurred in consequence of a refusal of consent or consent granted subject to conditions, you are entitled to recover from the Council compensation in respect of such loss or damage. If you wish to make a claim you must do so within 12 months from the date of this decision (or, if you appeal to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, within 12 months from the date of his decision). Claims should be submitted in writing to North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8AD.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

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 that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 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** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** 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 on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025**.
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) **no later than 30 June 2025**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
 - 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 2024/25

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 limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, 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 the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 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 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 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.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *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 AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR 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 bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then 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 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage 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 2025**.

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', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025 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 2024/25

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 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	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 bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.			
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 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .			

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			

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

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YYYY

DD/MM/YYYY

DD/MM/YYYY

ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

***If the response is 'no' please 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 2024/25

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 2025, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	'Yes' means that this authority:
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 must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

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

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward			<i>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.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs			<i>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.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>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.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>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.</i>
10. Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 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 REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

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.

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 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

(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 2024/25

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 2025.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY