

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Tolleshunt Knights

<https://www.tkpc.org.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, 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 2023/24 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 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")	✓		
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 (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
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

24/05/2024 08/06/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Miss Ann C Wood of Letchwood

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

08/06/2024

*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).

Miss Ann C Wood LL.B. Hons, DMS, Cert. HEd. (LPS)
134 Witham Road,
Black Notley,
Essex CM77 8LN
Tel - 07939 209180 e-mail - ann@letchwood.co.uk

Internal Audit Report for Tolleshunt Knights Parish Council

I am pleased to report that I have completed my Internal Audit for the Parish Council for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. The Audit was carried out on 24th May 2024.

Members should be aware that my work cannot be relied upon to identify the occasional omission or insignificant error, nor to disclose breaches of trust or statute, neglect or fraud which may have taken place and which are the responsibility of the Members of the Council to guard against.

Members will be pleased to know that I did not find anything major in my audit to report and that I found the record keeping to be of an extremely high standard.

I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk of the Council, Miss Vysian Banyard for her invaluable assistance during the Internal Audit.

Ann C Wood

Ann C. Wood LL.B.Hons, DMS, Cert.HE
8th June 2024

Items Raised by the 2022/2023 Internal Audit

1. The Council should investigate a Reserves Policy to include earmarked reserves
2. The Council's Asset Register was not reviewed during the year under review

Items Raised by the 2023/2024 Internal Audit

1. It should be noted that there should be no variation in Box 9 of the AGAR from year to year unless assets have been bought or disposed of. The Council decided to move to a depreciation register and the Clerk has been told that this is incorrect and the matter will be re-considered by the Council. Depreciation is not used in Local Government accounting.
2. There are no earmarked reserves identified. The Council should investigate a Reserves Policy to include earmarked reserves

Accounting Basis	Receipts and Payments		
Bank Accounts	Barclays – Current Account 93989046		As at 31 st March 2024 - £19942.59
Petty Cash	Not Applicable		
Income			Precept - £10800.00
			This agrees to the figure published by PKF Littlejohn
			Other Income - £1826.35
			This includes VAT refunds, football fees, playing field hire and other income
VAT	The Council is not registered for VAT		VAT claims were made on 3 rd April 2023, 7 th November 2023 and 25 th March 2024 and were reported in the monthly finance reports to the Council
ICO Registration	Data Protection Registration - ZA221769		Registered 7 th December 2016. Expires 6 th December 2024

Internal Control	Testing		Comments
Proper bookkeeping	• Is the cashbook maintained and up to date? • Is the cashbook arithmetic correct? • Is the cashbook regularly balanced?	Yes Yes Yes	The Council uses a Excel spreadsheet to manage the accounts and the cashbook is kept up to date. The bank balances are noted at each meeting with monthly income and expenditure comparison reports

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted	Has the Council formally adopted standing orders and financial regulations?	Yes	From reading the minutes for the year, the Standing Orders were not reviewed Financial Regulations were reviewed on 18 th September 2023 at item 3559.01
Tenders	Tenders exceeding the £25,000 threshold have been advertised on the Contract Finders website	N/A	
Other Policies	Has the Council formally adopted other policies?	Yes	A list of policies is available on the website
	Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specific duties?	Yes	The current Clerk has a contract of employment dated 19 th May 2014 and there is specific mention of the appointment as RFO
Payments Controls	Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased?	N/A	
	Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?	Yes	All vouchers were present and a sample was completed. The invoice was initialled by two councillors and minuted
	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Yes	Three claims were made during the year and were repaid, recorded and minuted
	Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?	Yes	There is a separate column in the accounts for Grants

Risk management arrangements	Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity?	No	The minutes of the Council meetings for the year 2023/2024 were read and no unusual financial activity was noted
	Do the minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment?	Yes	A financial/reputational risk assessment was carried out during the year and was agreed on 15 th January 2024 at item 3616.01 Risk assessment should include reference to the General Data Protection Regulations 2018
	Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	Yes	The Council is insured with Aviva Insurance Ltd

			through BHIB Ltd insurance brokers. Policy Number 100723637BDN/LCO00583. The policy has been seen. ELI and PLI are both at £10 million Fidelity Cover = recommended guidelines of year end balances + 50% of the precept
	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	Yes	An Internal Financial Control document has been approved and adopted
	Has the council adopted a Code of Conduct?	Yes	The Council adopted the (LGA) Maldon District Council Code of Conduct on 25 th July 2022 at item 3362/01
	Was the Annual Parish Council Meeting held within the prescribed timeframe?	Yes	The Parish Council must meet annually. In an election year, this must be on the day when the councillors take office or within 14 days, or on any day in May in any other year. The meeting was held on 15 th May 2023 and the first item 3485/01 was the election of the Chairman.
	Was the Annual Parish Meeting held within the prescribed timeframe?	Yes	A Parish Meeting must be held annually between 1 st March and 1 st June (both inclusive). The Annual Assembly took place on 17 th April 2023

Budgetary Controls	Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?	Yes	A budget was agreed at item 3424.01 on 19 th December 2022 The Precept was agreed on the same date at the same item at £10800.00
	Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council?	Yes	Financial reports are noted at each meeting
	Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	No	Any variances in budget are explained in the Annual Accounts

Income Controls	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Yes	Income payments are made directly into the council's account either by online transfer or BACS. Any cheques received are promptly banked
	Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification?	Yes	£10800.00
	Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective?	Yes	See above

Petty cash procedures	The Council does not operate a petty cash system	N/A	
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Payroll Controls	Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions?	Yes	The Clerk is the only employee and a contract of employment has been seen. The Clerk was appointed in 2004 as the RFO as well
	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the Council?	Yes	
	Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the Council?	Yes	The Council pays an office allowance for the Clerk
	Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the Council as an employer?	Yes	The Clerk submits RTI electronically and by post
Assets controls	Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care?	Yes	The Register was reviewed at item 3501.01 on 15 th May 2023
	Are the assets and Investments registers up to date?	Yes	It should be noted that the asset value listed in the Asset Register should be the same as that recorded on the AGAR. The Council decided to move to a depreciation register and the Clerk has been told that this is incorrect and the matter will be re-considered by the Council It should also be noted that there should be no variation in Box 9 of the AGAR from year to year

			unless assets have been bought or disposed of
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Bank Reconciliation	Is there a bank reconciliation for each account?	Yes	The Council only has one bank account
	Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion?	Yes	Bank reconciliations are reported to the Council meetings
	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	No	

Year-end procedures	Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)?	Yes	Accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis, as the Council is below the £200,000.00 threshold
	Do the accounts agree with the cashbook?	Yes	
	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	Yes	The vouchers were present and a sample was taken and agreed
	Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?	N/A	
	Were the Annual Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement and Annual Accounts and Accounting Statement signed by the Council?	No	Year End 31 st March 2024 AGAR Statements were completed but are still to be presented to the Council, agreed and signed
	Is there a Certificate of Exemption?	Yes	The Certificate of Exemption was completed but has not yet been agreed by the Council

Auditor's Reports	Was the Internal Auditor's Report reported to the Council?	Yes	A written report was considered by the Council at item 3515.01 on 19 th June 2023
	Was the External Auditor's Report reported to the Council?	N/A	The Council is exempt from a review by the External Auditor under Section 9 Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015

Fees	Does the Council Review its fees on a regular basis?	N/A	The only fees charged are for hire of the Playing Field and these are agreed at the time of the request to hire
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General Power of Competence	Does the Council have the General Power of Competence?	No	The Council operates under S137 LGA 1972
LCAS	Has the Council attained any of the LCAS levels?	No	
Reserves	Are the general reserves reasonable for the activities of the Council?	No	The reserves are significantly higher than the recommended level and the reason for this is that the Council is holding money for potential tree work
	Are earmarked reserves identified?	No	There are no earmarked reserves identified. The Council should investigate a Reserves Policy to include earmarked reserves
Sole Trustee	Is the Council a sole trustee of any charity?	No	
Grants to the Church	A grant was made to St Luke's PCC during the year under review	Yes	

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	19,140	19,453	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	10,000	10,900	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	4,216	1,826	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	3,421	3,693	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	N/A	N/A	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	10,482	9,386	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	19,453	19,000	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	19,453	19,000	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	58,341	58,341	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	N/A	N/A	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 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

VM Baryard

Date

14/06/2024

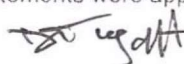
I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

17/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

3690.01d

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



Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH 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 2024, 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.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

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

17/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

3690.01c

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

Chair

[Signature]

Clerk

[Signature]

Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.	Yes	No
	✓	

tkpc.org.uk

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2023/24 Form 2

To be completed by smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2024, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015

There is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor, **provided** that the authority has certified itself as exempt at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2024 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2024** notifying the external auditor.

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2023/24, the higher of the authority's total gross income for the year or total gross annual expenditure, for the year did not exceed **£25,000**

Total annual gross income for the authority 2023/24: **£12,626 – 35**

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2023/24: **£13,079 – 37**

There are certain circumstances in which an authority will be **unable to certify itself as exempt**, so that a limited assurance review will still be required. If an authority **is unable to confirm the statements below then it cannot certify itself as exempt** and it **must** submit the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return Form 3 to the external auditor to undertake a limited assurance review for which a fee of **£210 +VAT** will be payable.

By signing this **Certificate of Exemption** you are confirming that:

- The authority was in existence on 1st April 2020
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2022/23), the external auditor **has not**:
 - issued a public interest report in respect of the authority or any entity connected with it
 - made a statutory recommendation to the authority, relating to the authority or any entity connected with it
 - issued an advisory notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice
 - commenced judicial review proceedings under section 31(1) of the Act
 - made an application under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration
- The court has not declared an item of account unlawful after a person made an appeal under section 28(3) of the Act.

If the above statements apply and the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000, then the Certificate of Exemption can be signed and a copy submitted to the external auditor **either by email or by post** (not both).

The Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, an analysis of variances and the bank reconciliation plus the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 including the period for the exercise of public rights still need to be fully completed and, along with a copy of this certificate, published on the authority website/webpage* before 1 July 2024.

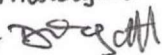
Signing this certificate confirms the authority will comply with the publication requirements.

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date

VMBurgard

17/06/2024

Signed by Chair



Date 17/6/24

I confirm that this Certificate of Exemption was approved by this authority on this date:

17/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

3690.01 b

Generic email address of Authority

tkpcclerk@gmail.com

Telephone number

0798 66 11 660

*Published web address

tkpc.org.uk

ONLY this Certificate of Exemption should be returned EITHER by email OR by post (not both) as soon as possible after certification to your external auditor, but no later than 30 June 2024. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

Audit of accounts for the year ended 31.3.2024

Explanation of variances

Variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except for variances of less than £200).

Section 2	2022/2023 £	2023/2024 £	Variance £	Variance %	Detailed 4,216explanation of variances
Box 2 Precept	10,000	10,800	800	8	No explanation Required
Box 3 Total other receipts	4,216	1,826	-2,390	-56.68	See below
Box 4 Staff costs	3,421	3,693	272	7.95	No explanation required
Box 5 Loan interest/capital repayments	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Box 6 All other payments	10,482	9,386	-1,096	-10.45	No explanation required
Box 9 Total fixed assets and long term investments and assets	58,341	58,341	0	0	No explanation required
Box 10 Total borrowings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Explanation for high reserves

The Parish Council has set aside a reserve of £2,000 for routine tree works in the playing field and woodland.

It is also awaiting a decision on a long term insurance claim against the Parish Council for subsidence of the adjoining Village Hall, which is not in the Parish Council's ownership. A number of oak trees owned by the Parish Council are implicated in the subsidence and will either have to be felled or a root barrier installed. The Council has therefore set aside funds for this work. It is very much hoped that the claim will be settled in the current financial year.

Box 3 – Total other receipts

Item	£	Explanation
IT equipment/toner	16.04	Toner cists shared with another Parish Council (same clerk)
VAT refunds	-1,138.03	Claims made as follows: Period Mar-Sept 22 - £1,034.63 Period Mar-Aug 23 - £586.84 Period Sept 23-Feb 24 - £410.03 The above reflects the spending of the Council on items which contain VAT
Pitch fees	-80	Bad weather curtailed the Football Club's use of the field 23/24
Playing field hire (not pitch fees)	-670	The dog training club did not use the field 23/24
Bench – donation from TKVHMC	-387.50	New bench installed 22/23 and costs shared with VHMC
Miscellaneous	-130.06	22/23 – includes shared training costs and cheques not cashed and therefore reissued
Total	-2389.55	

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL**Statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31.3.2024**

Prepared by V Banyard RFO

	£	£
Income	2022-23	2023-24
Parish precept	10000	10800
IT equipment/toner	0	16.04
VAT refund	2543.34	1405.31
Pitch fees	260	180
Playinf field hire (not pitch fees)	895	225
Bench - donation from TKVHMC	387.5	0
Miscellaneous	130.06	0
Total	14215.9	12626.35

Expenditure

Grounds maintenance	2099.5	3260.18
Play area inspection	0	65.1
Play area/field works and repairs	258.97	0
Playing field signage	45.99	47.56
Subscriptions	339.54	340.97
Insurance	635.85	628.59
Audit fees	110	110
Training courses	45	0
General administration	78.85	138.97
Hire of Village Hall for meetings	120	110
Clerk's salary and office allowance	3582.72	3909
Poppy wreath	20	25
Village Hall car park	265	0
TK cemetery grant	200	200
CCTV	0	0
ICO/GDPR costs	40	40
Election costs	0	127.15
Trucam/dog fouling patrols	813.24	945.18
Dog waste bins/bags	30.4	30.4
PC website costs	69.87	70.87
VH drive - repairs	0	0
IT costs and office equipment	352.36	730.83
Benches	850	1031.77
Defibrillator costs	2440	135
Reissued cheques	62.56	0
VAT paid	1443.07	1132.8
Total	13902.92	13079.37

VMBanyard

17/6/24

 17/6/24

Smaller authority name:

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION
OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY
RETURN (EXEMPT AUTHORITY)**

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

**Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 25, 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

NOTICE	NOTES
1. Date of announcement <u>24 JUNE 2024</u> (a) 2. Each year the smaller authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The AGAR has been published with this notice. It will not be reviewed by the appointed auditor, since the smaller authority has certified itself as exempt from the appointed auditor's review. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the AGAR, the accounting records for the financial year to which it relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2024, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to: (b) <u>V BANYARD - PARISH CLERK</u> <u>tmpcciera@gmail.com</u> commencing on (c) <u>26TH JUNE 2024</u> and ending on (d) <u>7TH AUGUST 2024</u> 3. Local government electors and their representatives also have: • The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and • The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority. The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only. 4. The smaller authority's AGAR is only subject to review by the appointed auditor if questions or objections raised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 lead to the involvement of the auditor. The appointed auditor is: PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 15 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD (sba@pkf-l.com) 5. This announcement is made by (e) <u>V BANYARD - RFO / CLERK</u>	(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below (b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts (c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below (d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July. (e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.

The basic position

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) (the Act) governs the work of auditors appointed to smaller authorities. This summary explains the provisions contained in Sections 26 and 27 of the Act. The Act and the [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) also cover the duties, responsibilities and rights of smaller authorities, other organisations and the public concerning the accounts being audited.

As a local elector, or an interested person, you have certain legal rights in respect of the accounting records of smaller authorities. As an interested person you can inspect accounting records and related documents. If you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them. You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the smaller authority form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.

The right to inspect the accounting records

Any interested person can inspect the accounting records, which includes but is not limited to local electors. You can inspect the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records. You can copy all, or part, of these records or documents. Your inspection must be about the accounts, or relate to an item in the accounts. You cannot, for example, inspect or copy documents unrelated to the accounts, or that include personal information (Section 26 (6) – (10) of the Act explains what is meant by personal information). You cannot inspect information which is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is information which would prejudice commercial confidentiality if it was released to the public and there is not, set against this, a very strong reason in the public interest why it should nevertheless be disclosed.

When smaller authorities have finished preparing accounts for the financial year and approved them, they must publish them (including on a website). There must be a 30 working day period, called the 'period for the exercise of public rights', during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounting records. Smaller authorities must tell the public, including advertising this on their website, that the accounting records and related documents are available to inspect. By arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records. You may have to pay a copying charge. The 30 working day period must include a common period of inspection during which all smaller authorities' accounting records are available to inspect. This will be 1-12 July 2024 for 2023/24 accounts. The advertisement must set out the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, how you can communicate to the smaller authority that you wish to inspect the accounting records and related documents, the name and address of the auditor, and the relevant legislation that governs the inspection of accounts and objections.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

You should first ask your smaller authority about the accounting records, since they hold all the details. If you are a local elector, your right to ask questions of the external auditor is enshrined in law. However, while the auditor will answer your questions where possible, they are not always obliged to do so. For example, the question might be better answered by another organisation, require investigation beyond the auditor's remit, or involve disproportionate cost (which is borne by the local taxpayer). Give your smaller authority the opportunity first to explain anything in the accounting records that you are unsure about. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you can question the external auditor about the accounting records.

The law limits the time available for you formally to ask questions. This must be done in the period for the exercise of public rights, so let the external auditor know your concern as soon as possible. The

advertisement or notice that tells you the accounting records are available to inspect will also give the period for the exercise of public rights during which you may ask the auditor questions, which here means formally asking questions under the Act. You can ask someone to represent you when asking the external auditor questions.

Before you ask the external auditor any questions, inspect the accounting records fully, so you know what they contain. Please remember that you cannot formally ask questions, under the Act, after the end of the period for the exercise of public rights. You may ask your smaller authority other questions about their accounts for any year, at any time. But these are not questions under the Act.

You can ask the external auditor questions about an item in the accounting records for the financial year being audited. However, your right to ask the external auditor questions is limited. The external auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions. The external auditor cannot answer questions about policies, finances, procedures or anything else unless it is directly relevant to an item in the accounting records. Remember that your questions must always be about facts, not opinions. To avoid misunderstanding, we recommend that you always put your questions in writing.

The right to make objections at audit

You have inspected the accounting records and asked your questions of the smaller authority. Now you may wish to object to the accounts on the basis that an item in them is in your view unlawful or there are matters of wider concern arising from the smaller authority's finances. A local government elector can ask the external auditor to apply to the High Court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, or to issue a report on matters which are in the public interest. You must tell the external auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you think the item is unlawful, or why you think that a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide the external auditor with the evidence you have to support your objection. Disagreeing with income or spending does not make it unlawful. To object to the accounts you must write to the external auditor stating you want to make an objection, including the information and evidence below and you must send a copy to the smaller authority. The notice must include:

- confirmation that you are an elector in the smaller authority's area;
- why you are objecting to the accounts and the facts on which you rely;
- details of any item in the accounts that you think is unlawful; and
- details of any matter about which you think the external auditor should make a public interest report.

Other than it must be in writing, there is no set format for objecting. You can only ask the external auditor to act within the powers available under the [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#).

A final word

You may not use this 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor. Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved, they will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. They may also decide not to consider an objection if they think that it is frivolous or vexatious, or if it repeats an objection already considered. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision not to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, you will have to pay for the action yourself.

For more detailed guidance on public rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication [Local authority accounts: A guide to your rights](#) are available from the NAO website.

If you wish to contact your authority's appointed external auditor please write to the address in paragraph 4 of the *Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return*.

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL**Statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31.3.2024**

Prepared by V Banyard RFO

	£	£
Income	2022-23	2023-24
Parish precept	10000	10800
IT equipment/toner	0	16.04
VAT refund	2543.34	1405.31
Pitch fees	260	180
Playinf field hire (not pitch fees)	895	225
Bench - donation from TKVHMC	387.5	0
Miscellaneous	130.06	0
Total	14215.9	12626.35

Expenditure

Grounds maintenance	2099.5	3260.18
Play area inspection	0	65.1
Play area/field works and repairs	258.97	0
Playing field signage	45.99	47.56
Subscriptions	339.54	340.97
Insurance	635.85	628.59
Audit fees	110	110
Training courses	45	0
General administration	78.85	138.97
Hire of Village Hall for meetings	120	110
Clerk's salary and office allowance	3582.72	3909
Poppy wreath	20	25
Village Hall car park	265	0
TK cemetery grant	200	200
CCTV	0	0
ICO/GDPR costs	40	40
Election costs	0	127.15
Trucam/dog fouling patrols	813.24	945.18
Dog waste bins/bags	30.4	30.4
PC website costs	69.87	70.87
VH drive - repairs	0	0
IT costs and office equipment	352.36	730.83
Benches	850	1031.77
Defibrillator costs	2440	135
Reissued cheques	62.56	0
VAT paid	1443.07	1132.8
Total	13902.92	13079.37

VMBanyard

17/6/24

 17/6/24

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

Bank reconciliation as at 31.3.2024

Prepared by V Banyard (parish clerk and RFO)

Date: 12.4.2024

Balance as per bank statement:

Community Account dated: 31.3.2024 £ 19,942.59

Less unpresented cheques as at 31.3.2024 £ 942.75

100661 £ 127.15

100662 £ 815.60

Add any unbanked cash as at 31.3.2024 £ -

Net balance as at 31.3.2024 £ 18,999.84

The net balance reconciles to the cash book (receipts and payments account) as follows:

CASH BOOK

Opening balance 1.4.2023 £ 19,452.86

Add: receipts in the year £ 12,626.35

Less: payments in the year £ 13,079.37

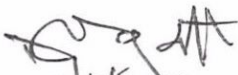
Closing balance as per cash book (receipts and payments book) £ 18,999.84

as at 31.3.2024

Final closing balance as at 31.3.2024 £ 18,999.84

Chair:

Date:


17/6/24

RFO: VMBanyard

Date: 17/6/24

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2023/24 Form 2

To be completed by smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2024, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015

There is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor, **provided** that the authority has certified itself as exempt at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2024 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2024** notifying the external auditor.

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2023/24, the higher of the authority's total gross income for the year or total gross annual expenditure, for the year did not exceed **£25,000**

Total annual gross income for the authority 2023/24: **£12,626 – 35**

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2023/24: **£13,079 – 37**

There are certain circumstances in which an authority will be **unable to certify itself as exempt**, so that a limited assurance review will still be required. If an authority **is unable to confirm the statements below then it cannot certify itself as exempt** and it **must** submit the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return Form 3 to the external auditor to undertake a limited assurance review for which a fee of **£210 +VAT** will be payable.

By signing this **Certificate of Exemption** you are confirming that:

- The authority was in existence on 1st April 2020
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2022/23), the external auditor **has not**:
 - issued a public interest report in respect of the authority or any entity connected with it
 - made a statutory recommendation to the authority, relating to the authority or any entity connected with it
 - issued an advisory notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice
 - commenced judicial review proceedings under section 31(1) of the Act
 - made an application under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration
- The court has not declared an item of account unlawful after a person made an appeal under section 28(3) of the Act.

If the above statements apply and the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000, then the Certificate of Exemption can be signed and a copy submitted to the external auditor **either** by email **or** by post (not both).

The Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, an analysis of variances and the bank reconciliation plus the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 including the period for the exercise of public rights still need to be fully completed and, along with a copy of this certificate, published on the authority website/webpage* before 1 July 2024.

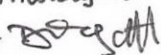
Signing this certificate confirms the authority will comply with the publication requirements.

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date

VMBurgard

17/06/2024

Signed by Chair



Date 17/6/24

I confirm that this Certificate of Exemption was approved by this authority on this date:

17/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

3690.01 b

Generic email address of Authority

tkpcclerk@gmail.com

Telephone number

0798 66 11 660

*Published web address

tkpc.org.uk

ONLY this Certificate of Exemption should be returned EITHER by email OR by post (not both) as soon as possible after certification to your external auditor, but no later than 30 June 2024. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH 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 2024, that:

	Agreed		
	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
			✓

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

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

17/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

3690.01c

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

Chair

[Signature]

Clerk

[Signature]

Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.	Yes	No
	✓	

thpc.org.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	19,140	19,453	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	10,000	10,900	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	4,216	1,826	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	3,421	3,693	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	N/A	N/A	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	10,482	9,386	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	19,453	19,000	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	19,453	19,000	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	58,341	58,341	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	N/A	N/A	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
1a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 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

VM Baryard

Date

14/06/2024

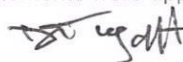
I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

17/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

3690.01d

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



Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Tolleshunt Knights

<https://www.tkpc.org.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, 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 2023/24 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 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")	✓		
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 (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
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

24/05/2024 08/06/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Miss Ann C Wood of Letchwood

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date 08/06/2024

*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).

Tolleshunt Knights Parish Council

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023-24

8th June 2024

F. The Parish Council does not have Petty Cash

H. The Asset Register had been completed and was up to date but the minutes record a decision to change to a depreciation value for the Asset Register. This has been discussed with the Clerk and action will be taken to revert to the correct way of determining the value of the assets

Ann C Wood

Ann C Wood

Letchwood

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL**Statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31.3.2024**

Prepared by V Banyard RFO

	£	£
Income	2022-23	2023-24
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V Banyard

17/6/24

 17/6/24

TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS PARISH COUNCIL

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Prepared by V Banyard (parish clerk and RFO)

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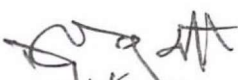
Closing balance as per cash book (receipts and payments book) £ 18,999.84

as at 31.3.2024

Final closing balance as at 31.3.2024 £ 18,999.84

Chair:

Date:


17/6/24

RFO: VMBanyard

Date: 17/6/24