

Warmington Parish Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2021

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

<p>1. The audit of accounts for Warmington Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2021 has been completed and the accounts have been published.</p> <p>2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Warmington Parish Council on application to:</p> <p>(a) <u>Sarah Rodger - Clerk to the Council</u> <u>clerk@warmington.org</u> <u>www.warmington.org</u></p> <p>(b) <u>10:00 - 14:00</u></p> <p>3. Copies will be provided to any person on payment of £____ (c) for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.</p> <p>Announcement made by: (d) <u>Sarah Rodger - Clerk to the Council</u></p> <p>Date of announcement: (e) <u>5th September 2021</u></p>	<p>Notes</p> <p>This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website. The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.</p> <p>(a) Insert the name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR</p> <p>(b) Insert the hours during which inspection rights may be exercised</p> <p>(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs</p> <p>(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice</p> <p>(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice</p>
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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

Warmington Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	
1. Balances brought forward	88,620	81,961	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	57,350	69,780	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	9,196	76,012	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	23,339	18,583	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	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	49,866	90,400	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	81,961	118,770	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	81,961	118,770	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	235,724	238,408	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	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 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

APPROVED REQUIRED

Date

02/04/2021

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

08/04/2021

as recorded in minute reference:

1698(b)

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

APPROVED REQUIRED

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

Warmington 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 2021, that:

	Agreed		‘Yes’ means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		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
			✓

*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:

08/04/2021

and recorded as minute reference:

1697 (a)

MINUTE REFERENCE



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

Chairman

Clerk



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Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

Warmington Parish Council

www.warmington.org

During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, 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 2020/21 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 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.			✓
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

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

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

16/04/2021

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Helen Hoier

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

WORTHANTS CALC LTD
INTERNAL AUDIT
APPROVED

Date

16/04/2021

*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).

Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Name of council:	Warmington Parish Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	Helen Hoier	Date of report:	13 May 2021
Year ending:	31 March 2021	Date audit carried out:	16 April 2021

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. Managing the council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and management and not left for internal audit. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

I met with Sarah Rodger (Clerk/RFO) on 16 April 2021 via Zoom to carry out the year-end audit of the Council. Upon examination of bookkeeping, due process, risk management, budget, payroll, asset control, bank reconciliations and year-end procedures; it is clear that every effort is made to ensure that the Council acts lawfully, transparently and in accordance with proper practices. I am also particularly impressed at the Council's ability to continue to carry out its functions over the past year despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The Council has a turnover of over £25,000 and therefore is not obliged to comply with the Transparency Code, however all governance and financial documents are easily accessible to interested parties via the Council's website. The Council is not currently eligible to use the General Power of Competence and as such understands that it must ensure it spends within its legal powers (particularly Section 137 under which there were no items of expenditure in 2020/21).

Issues raised in 2019/20:

- Ensuring that the Council's internal controls and financial procedures with regards to accountability, governance and transparency are as effective as possible for which suggestions included:
 - Reviewing regularly governing documents in accordance with any changes in legislation and/or recommended good practice.
 - Recording in the minutes the total balance of all accounts when the Council approves the bank reconciliation.
 - Extending the listing of each legal power with the relevant budget heading to include agendas and minutes.

Issues raised in 2020/21:

- It is evident from governing documents and when speaking with the Clerk/RFO that the Council is fully aware of its responsibilities regarding public finances, especially with regards to accountability, governance and transparency. However, this could be even more effective by ensuring the following:
 - Holding meetings of the full Council on a monthly basis (as appropriate for its annual turnover) rather than substituting some months with a meeting of one of its committees.
 - Continuing to transact the annual budgeting process within the same agenda item but minuting the budget and precept separately in a sub list.

Other than the above matters, the Council appears to be performing well, with its business affairs managed properly by a very competent Clerk/RFO and committed Council members.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Helen Hoier
Internal Auditor to the Council
01536 330858/07721 778773
h.hoier_las@btinternet.com

The figures submitted in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2020	Year ending 31 March 2021
1. Balances brought forward	88,620	81,961
2. Annual precept	57,350	69,780
3. Total other receipts	9,196	76,012
4. Staff costs	22,972	18,583
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. Total other payments	50,233	90,400
7. Balances carried forward	81,961	118,770
8. Total cash and investments	81,961	118,770
9. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	226,519	235,724
10. Total borrowings	0	0

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **WARMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL – NH0234**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2021; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2020/21

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR 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.

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

The Internal Auditor's response to Objective F is inconsistent with information in the bank reconciliation. The clerk has confirmed the petty cash has not been spent or added to during the year.

3 External auditor certificate 2020/21

We 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 2021.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

01/09/2021

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)