

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

GREAT HORWOOD 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 2023, 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	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
			✓	

***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:

19/06/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

19c

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

Chairman

JW Gilbert

Clerk

Mandy Cliffe

<https://www.e-voice.org.uk/ghpc>

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

GREAT HORWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	62,987	55,102	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	29,565	30,000	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	24,677	3,699	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	8,580	9,152	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	1,377	811	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	52,170	19,592	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	55,102	59,246	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	55,102	59,246	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	143,290	143,640	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	3,651	2,840	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 do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 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

Mandy Cliffe

Date

19/06/2023

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

19/06/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

19c

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

J.W. Gilbert

Smaller authority name: **GREAT HORWOOD PARISH COUNCIL**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION
OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE &
ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN**

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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

The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/404)

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement__20th June 2023 (a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.</p> <p>Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of 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 must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2020, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) Mandy Cliffe, Acting Responsible Financial Officer 3 Spring Close, Great Horwood, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK17 0QU 01296 715829</p> <p>commencing on (c) Monday 3rd July 2023</p> <p>and ending on (d) Friday 11th August 20223</p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:</p> <p>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 15 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD (sba@pkf-littlejohn.com)</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Mandy Cliffe Acting Responsible Financial Officer</p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must start on or before 1 September 2021.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

Name of smaller authority: **Great Horwood Parish Council**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Buckinghamshire**

On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:

Commencing on Monday 3rd July 2023

and ending on Friday 11th August 2023

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2023 (i.e. Monday 3 July – Friday 14 July).

We have suggested the following dates: Monday 5 June – Friday 14 July 2023. The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Monday 3 July – Friday 11 August 2023.)

Signed: 

Role: Acting RFO

This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review:

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation – this form is not for publication on your website.

3 Chase Farm Barns
Whaddon Road
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK17 0QB

Great Horwood Parish Council
Sent as an email attachment.

19th May 2022

Dear Mandy

Great Horwood Parish Council Internal Audit Report 2022 - 23

The internal audit was carried out on parts of 12th, 13th, 16th and 19th May 2023, and other dates I haven't recorded. It has taken much longer than I would have liked but circumstances have influenced the process, I recognise the difficulties and have tried to work sympathetically.

The process used and final observations are given below.

If you need any further clarification, then please let me know.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Groom

Process [not necessarily in this order]

1. Receive documents and files from the Parish Clerk.
2. Cross checked payments and receipts authorised with the Council minutes.
3. Treasurers' Account TSB 00048669 – Checked all entries within the statements, invoices.
4. Business Instant Access Account TSB 20138260 – checked statements, balances and interest received.
5. Horwode Pece Account TSB 00602887 – Checked spreadsheet to bank statements and invoices.
6. Ledger crossed check with invoices and bank statements. On this occasion due to exceptional circumstances the lightly used paying in and cheque books were not checked.
7. Checked bank statement payments with ledger.
8. Reviewed the receipts and payments, and bank reconciliations.
9. Reviewed Insurance Policy and Schedule Details.
10. Checked payments and receipts authorisation sheets to ledger and with bank statements.
11. Checked VAT recording and refund claims with the ledger.
12. Checked SAIS document partially against the Council minutes, in future GHPC will self-audit activity with this document.
13. Reviewed the Risk Register and management policy.
14. Cross checked ledger with budget actuals and AGAR documents.
15. AGAR 2022 – 2023:
 - a. Section 2 – Accounting Statement – Figures checked with accounting documentation.
 - b. Explanation of Variances proforma – reviewed.
 - c. Bank reconciliation proforma – reviewed.
 - d. Explanation for 'high' reserves – not applicable.
 - e. Asset Register – reviewed.
16. AGAR – Annual Internal Audit Report completed.

Item	Detail
1.	It seems the cheque and paying in books not reviewed due to extenuating circumstances , other accounting documentation sufficed.
2.	The GHPC minutes were reviewed, and it was noted that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments are routinely recorded and agreed. • Financial Regulations were reviewed. • Bank reconciliations were verified. • Budgets for Worthy Causes and 23/24 and regular payments were agreed. • The Risk Management Policy Statement, GHPC Roles and Responsibilities were reviewed.
3.	Several aspects of VAT accounting were discussed, and corrections agreed. I need to note that this subject was also the subject of comment in 2021-22.
4.	Checking the ledger to budget actuals with the aid of the explanation document. The figures cross checked except I could not reconcile the Total Expenditure for 2022/2023:

GHPC IA Report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ledger total was £25617.33 to which the Horwode Pece maintenance costs of £3937.76 needed to be added giving a total of £29555.09 versus £28686.36. • The difference is the Horwode Pece share of the insurance £868.73. • Of the total insurance cost of £1303.10 only the Parish share £434.37 is shown in the Budget Actuals, the Horwode Pece share needs to be shown as an expense in the Budget Actuals. <p>This query was resolved via an adjustment, and it is understood that accounting for this items will be revised in the next financial year.</p>
5.	<p>The Asset Register and the insurance document were briefly reviewed, and no immediate observations occurred. However last year a physical inspection of assets to ensure presence/condition was recommended to link to insurance. If this hasn't been done, then it continues to be a recommendation.</p>
6.	<p>When comparing the format of accounting used it does appear to be more complex than other Parish Councils in the IA's experience, although the Horwode Pece dimension may add complexity. It is suggested that the Parish Clerk might 'compare' notes with other local Parish Clerks to identify any possible simplification.</p>
7.	<p>When checking the AGAR pages, 5 of 6, it was noted that question 11a. had not been ticked. When looking at the March 2023 Practitioners Guide question 11a. requires a yes or no tick. Given the tick at 11b. it should be No.</p>
8.	<p>Completion of the AGAR IA report was straightforward, however given this is the second year of VAT accounting concerns, with reassurances given for future changes it has not been flagged.</p>

GREAT HORWOOD PARISH COUNCIL: - AGAR Bank Reconciliation 2022 - 2023

Financial Year End 31st March 2023

Prepared by Amanda Cliffe, Acting RFO Great | 23 April 2023

	£	£
Balance as per Bank Statements at 31st March 2023		
Treasurers Account TSB Account 00048669	3263	
Business Instant Access Account TSB Account 20138260	51430	
Horwode Pece Account TSB Account 00602887	4553	
Total Bank Balance at 31st March 2023		<u>59246</u>
Less unrepresented cheques at 31st March 2023		
Unbanked cheques		
Nil	0	0
Total unbanked cheques		
Unbanked cash	0	0
Total unbanked cash		0
Net Balance at 31st March 2023		<u>59246</u>

The net balances reconciles to the ledger as follows

Opening Balance 1 Apr 2022 - Treasurer's	TSB Account 00048669	7479
Opening Balance 1 Apr 2022 BIA	TSB Account 20138260	43664
Opening Balance 1 Apr 2022 HP	TSB Account 00602887	3959
Add receipts Treasurer's	TSB Account 00048669	33412
Add receipts BIA	TSB Account 20138260	287
Add receipts HP	TSB Account 00602887	0
Less payments Treasurer's	TSB Account 00048669	-25617
Less payments BIA	TSB Account 20138260	0
Less payments HP	TSB Account 00602887	-3938
Closing balance at 31st March 2023		<u>59246</u>

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: **Great Horwood Parish Council**
County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all Blue highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- New from 2020/21 onwards:** variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input. DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	62,987	55,102				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	29,565	30,000	435	1.47%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	24,877	3,637	-21,040	85.26%	YES		2021/2022 was an exceptional year for receipts due to a grant for rubber chippings £10350, a Salix loan for LED street lamps £4037, larger than normal VAT claims totalling £6682 due to expenditure detailed plus landscaping and tree care projects). The period 2019 - 2022 was also a period of high receipts due to all the projects that have been undertaken (Village Hall repairs, playground refurbishments as above, New homes bonus). Income for 2022 - 2023 is now more in line with 2017/2028 levels of £4725/£4118.
4 Staff Costs	8,580	9,152	572	6.67%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	1,377	811	-566	41.10%	YES		in 2021/2022, two payments totalling £971 were made to PWLB which paid off the loan and the first payment of £406 was made to Salix for LED streetlighting. In 2022/2023 2 payments totalling £811 were made on the Salix loan.
6 All Other Payments	62,170	19,630	-32,640	62.56%	YES		in 2021/2022 LED streetlighting was purchased, net payment £5303 after loan and a new rubber chipping surface for the Recreation Ground was purchased costing £27115. Payments have reduced in 2022/2023 as large projects have been completed.
7 Balances Carried Forward	65,102	59,246			NO	VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	65,102	59,246				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and Assets	143,290	143,959	709	0.49%	NO		
10 Total Borrowings	3,661	2,640	-811	22.21%	YES		Not required

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable
Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

BOX 10 VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED IF CHANGE CAN BE EXPLAINED BY BOX 5 (CAPITAL PLUS INTEREST PAYMENT)