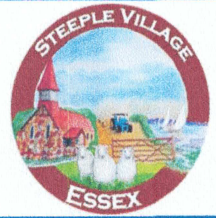


Steeple Parish Council

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN
Tel: 07810781509 email steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com
<https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil/>



ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

To be held in Steeple Village Hall on

WEDNESDAY 8th. MAY 2024 at 7pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Report from Steeple PC Chairman - Councillor K. Davey
3. Report from ECC - Councillor Wendy Stamp
4. Report from MDC - Councillor Linda Haywood
5. Community Group Report
6. Public Forum

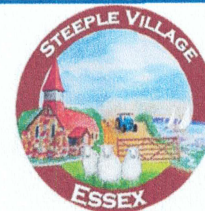
K Davey

Councillor Kay Davey
Chairperson
Steeple Parish Council

3rd. May 2024

Steeple Parish Council

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money
 7 Roach Vale Colchester Essex CO4 3YN
 Tel: 07810781509 email steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com
<https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil/>



Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the forthcoming meeting of Steeple Parish Council to be held on

WEDNESDAY 8th. MAY immediately after the Annual Parish Assembly in the Village Hall

for the purpose of transacting the business ONLY shown on the agenda

KBMoney

Kevin B. Money – Parish Clerk to the Council – 2nd. May 2024

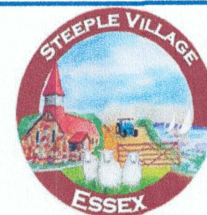
The Press and Public are welcome to attend

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

- 039/2024** **2023/24 Chairman Welcome**
- 040/2024** **Apologies for Absence**
- 041/2024** **Election of Chairman for the 2024/25 year**
 The Chairman to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form
- 042/2024** **Election of Vice-Chairman for the 2024/25 year**
 The Vice-Chairman to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form
- 043/2024** **To re-adopt all Council policies – sent prior to meeting**
 2024-25 Council policies and procedures can be found at
<https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil/policies-procedures/>
- 044/2024** **2024/25 Chairman to Close Annual meeting**
- 045/2024** **Closure of the Meeting**
 To Close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business

Steeple Parish Council

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money
 7 Roach Vale Colchester Essex CO4 3YN
 Tel: 07810781509 email steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com
[www.https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil](https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil)



Dear Councillor

You are requested to attend the forthcoming meeting of Steeple Parish Council to be held on

WEDNESDAY 8th. MAY 2024 immediately after the AGM in the Village Hall for the purpose of transacting the business ONLY shown on the agenda

KBMoney - Kevin B. Money – Parish Clerk to the Council – 2nd. May 2024

The Press and Public are welcome to attend

FULL COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

047/2024 Chairman welcome

048/2024 Apologies for Absence

049/2024 Declaration of Interest

To declare any Pecuniary, Registerable or non-Registerable Interest relating to items on the agenda

050/2024 To approve the Minutes of the last Full Council meeting of Steeple Parish Council

To receive and agree the minutes of the last STPC meeting held on 13th. March 2024

051/2024 Public Participation Session. The Chairman will invite questions and observations from members of the public present. A maximum time of **15 minutes** will be allowed

054/2024 Highways issues

a) Speedwatch update from Cllr K. Potten

055/2024 Planning Application/s

056/2024 Planning Appeals affecting Steeple

057/2024 Planning Decision/s made by MDC affecting Steeple

AGR/MAL/24/00143 - Lunendales Farm Steeple Road Southminster Essex

Prior notification for two agricultural buildings. **PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED**

HOUSE/MAL/24/00104 - Casa Mia The Street Steeple Southminster

Single storey rear and side extension. Demolition of existing conservatory. Addition of roof lights.

Alterations to fenestration. Alteration to existing driveway. **APPROVE** subject to conditions

HOUSE/MAL/24/00148 - Brambleberry Maldon Road Steeple Southminster

Two storey side and rear extension. **APPROVE** subject to conditions

059/2024 Monkey Challenge - The Play Solution for All Ages

060/2024 Finance

- 1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 30th. April 2024
- 2) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budget 2024/2025
- 3) To approve the payment of Accounts for April & May 2024 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council's financial requirements

061/2024 2023/2024 Annual Return

- 1) To Receive the Internal Auditors report for 2023/2024
- 2) To Receive and, if agreed, sign the Certificate of Exemption for 2023/2024
- 3) To Receive and, if agreed, sign Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement of AGAR 2023/2024
- 4) To Receive and, if agreed, sign Section 2 - Accounting Statement of AGAR 2023/2024

062/2024 Councillors to note the 2024 meeting dates 10.7.24: 11.09.24: 13.11.24

063/2024 Items for Next Agenda

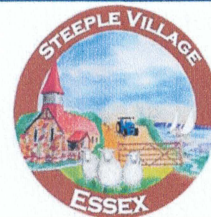
064/2024 Date of Next Full Council meetings – Wednesday 10th. July 2024

065/2024 Closure of the Meeting

To Close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business

Steeple Parish Council

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN
Tel: 07810781509 email steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com
Website: www.steeplepc.co.uk



Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 13th. March 2024 at 7pm in Steeple Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J. Partridge (Vice-Chair), K. Potten, M. Findlay and Kevin B. Money Parish Clerk.

There were 3 members of the public present.

019/2024 Vice-Chairman welcome. The Vice-Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

020/2024 Apologies for Absence were received from ECC Cllr W. Stamp, MDC Cllr L. Haywood and Cllr K. Davey

021/2024 Declaration of Interest

To declare any Pecuniary, Registerable or non-Registerable Interest relating to items on the agenda

None Declared

022/2024 To approve the Minutes of the last Full Council meeting of Steeple Parish Council

To receive and agree the minutes of the last STPC meeting held on 15th. January 2024. **All Agreed**

023/2024 Public Participation Session. The Chairman will invite questions and observations from members of the public present. A maximum time of **15 minutes** will be allowed

A litter pick was undertaken by residents today. Pothole opposite the kebab lorry is still unrepaired

Traffic still speeds through the village. 3 sites in Steeple have been nominated for Speedwatch with 12 volunteers having signed up and trained.

Steeple & Mayland Community Speed Watch

16 sessions from 19/7/23 to date (30 to 60 mins per session)

14 sessions in Steeple

58 speed offences recorded in Steeple

17 of the 58 offences were reported to the police

SITE	NO OF SESSIONS	NO OF SPEED OFFENCES	MAX SPEED RECORDED
The Star Inn	3	8	42
The Church	3	13	41
Canney Corner	8	37	41

024/2024 Essex County Councillor report – ECC Cllr W. Stamp. Cllr W. Stamp has provided information throughout the month which has been forwarded onto Councillors and the website

025/2024 District Councillor report – Cllr L. Haywood. No report was given

026/2024 Highways issues

40mph VAS sign needs recalibrating: Outside thatched cottage a drain is broken: Drain missing outside Ash cottage: Pavement outside The Star Public House:

027/2024 Street Lighting in Steeple – Update from the Clerk

The outstanding electricity bill has been settled by a 50% payment and a Direct Debit set up as from 15th. March 2024 of £185.30p with the remainder paid monthly of £181.00p

028/2024 Councillors to discuss and decide on the Grass cutting quotation for 2024/2025

Cllr J. Partridge proposed accepting the grass cutting contract for 2024/2025. Cllr K. Potten seconded.

All Agreed

029/2024 Planning Application/s

24/00104/HOUSE - Casa Mia The Street Steeple Southminster

Single storey rear and side extension. Demolition of existing conservatory. Addition of roof lights. Alterations to fenestration. Alteration to existing driveway. **RESOLVED:** No Objection to this application

24/00148/HOUSE - Brambleberry Maldon Road Steeple Southminster
Two storey side and rear extension **RESOLVED**: No Objection to this application

030/2024 **Planning Appeals affecting Steeple.** No planning appeals have been received

031/2024 **Planning Decision/s made by MDC affecting Steeple.**

LBC/MAL/23/01030 - 1 Rosedene Cottage The Street Steeple Southminster

Demolition of existing rear extension and erection of single storey rear extension. **REFUSE**

HOUSE/MAL/23/00098 - Lullings Maldon Road Steeple Essex

Proposed single storey front extension, alteration to porch roof, fenestration alterations and new steps to door.

APPROVE

032/2024 **Playing Field/Play Equipment/Outside Gym/Community Group Garden**

Due to the severe bad weather the recreation ground has not been inspected but there were no reported incidents or issues from the Community Group. Community Group removed branches and leaves. Play equipment looks in good condition.

033/2024 **Monkey Challenge - The Play Solution for All Ages**

Cllr K. Potten is struggling to make contact with Play Solution. She will continue to try and obtain information.

034/2024 **Finance**

1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 29th. February 2024

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 29th. February 2024

2) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budget 2023/2024

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budget 2023/2024

3) To approve the payment of Accounts for February and March 2024 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council's financial requirements. **All Agreed**

4) Councillors to discuss outstanding British Gas bill for the street lighting – see item 027/2024

035/2024 **Councillors to note the 2024 meeting dates 10.7.24: 11.09.24: 13.11.24**

036/2024 **Items for Next Agenda**

Speedwatch update

037/2024 **Date of Next Full Council meetings – Wednesday 8th. May 2024 which is the Annual Village Meeting at 7pm followed by the STPC AGM followed by a brief STPC Full Council meeting**

038/2024 **Closure of the Meeting**

To Close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business

The Vice-Chairman then closed the meeting at 7.50pm and thanked everyone for attending.

		BANK RECONCILIATION	
Financial year ending 31.03.25			
Bank Balance as at		30.04.24	
Unity Trust Bank - Current account		£ 9,434.70	
	Total	£ 9,434.70	
Less Unpresented cheques		£ -	
Total of unpresented cheques		£ -	
Net Bank Balances as at		£ 9,434.70	
CASH BOOK			
Balance as at 01.04.24		£ 8,660.37	
Plus Receipts		£ 1,056.71	
Total		£ 9,717.08	
Less Payments		£ 282.38	
Grand Total		£ 9,434.70	
Difference		-£ 0.00	
<hr/>			
Financial year ending 31.03.25			
Bank Balance as at			
Unity Trust Bank - Current account			
	Total		
Less Unpresented cheques			
Total of unpresented cheques			
Net Bank Balances as at			
CASH BOOK			
Balance as at 01.04.24			
Plus Receipts			
Total			
Less Payments			
Grand Total			
Difference			
<hr/>			
Financial year ending 31.03.25			
Bank Balance as at			
Unity Trust Bank - Current account			
	Total		
Less Unpresented cheques			
Total of unpresented cheques			
Net Bank Balances as at			
CASH BOOK			
Balance as at 01.04.24			
Plus Receipts			
Total			
Less Payments			
Grand Total			
Difference			



Steeple Parish Council
Current T1
 60-83-01 • 20449735

Balance Available
£ 9,434.70 £ 9,434.70

Balances are correct as of 11:21 on 03 May 2024.

↓ Date	Description	Paid in	Paid out	Balance
16/04/24	Direct Debit (BRITISH GAS • 603459309270224000 BUSINE)		-101.38	9,434.70
15/04/24	Direct Debit (BRITISH GAS • 603459309270224000 BUSINE)		-181.00	9,536.08
12/04/24	HMRC VTR • XLV126000106141	1,056.71		9,717.08
31/03/24	Service Charge		-18.00	8,660.37
18/03/24	B/P to: British Gas • 603459308		-235.85	8,678.37
15/03/24	B/P to: Maldon DC • STE03790021		-100.95	8,914.22
15/03/24	B/P to: HMRC CUMBERNAULD • 475PF00216025		-60.40	9,015.17
15/03/24	B/P to: STEEPLE VILLAGE HA • 2024-004		-8.00	9,075.57
15/03/24	B/P to: Kevin B. Money • CLERK WAGES		-241.66	9,083.57
15/03/24	B/P to: HMRC CUMBERNAULD • 475PF00216025		-60.40	9,325.23
15/03/24	B/P to: Kevin B. Money • CLERK WAGES		-241.66	9,385.63
15/03/24	B/P to: STEEPLE VILLAGE HA • 2023-058		-10.00	9,627.29
15/03/24	Direct Debit (BRITISH GAS • 603459309270224000 BUSINE)		-283.95	9,637.29
21/02/24	B/P to: British Gas • REF: 603459309		-1,090.30	9,921.24

STEEPLE PC ACTUAL AGAINST BUDGET REPORT

		Budget 2024/25	Total Income / Spend to May '24	Left In Budget as at May '24
Income	Precept	11613	£ -	
	Other Income/Grants/VAT Refund	66	£ -	
	VAT Refund	0	£ 1,056.71	
	Interest	0	£ -	
	TOTAL	11679	£ 1,056.71	
Exp.				
Staff	Salary	3625	£ 568.12	£ 3,056.88
	Office Allowance	216	£ 36.00	£ 180.00
	TOTAL	3841	£ 604.12	£ 3,236.88
Adm.	Admin / IT	100	£ 46.06	£ 53.94
	Audit Fees	80	£ 105.20	£ 25.20
	TOTAL	180	£ 151.26	£ 28.74
General	Grass Cutting	4400	£ 207.37	£ 4,192.63
	Meeting cost	60	£ 10.00	£ 50.00
	Street Lighting	955	£ 277.38	£ 677.62
	Insurance	486	£ 462.17	£ 23.83
	EALC/NALC Subscriptions	225	£ 166.64	£ 58.36
	Training	100	£ -	£ 100.00
	Donations & S137	40	£ -	£ 40.00
	Tru Cam	400	£ -	£ 400.00
	Website	0	£ -	£ -
	Travel Expenses	50	£ -	£ 50.00
	Playing Field	800	£ 300.00	£ 500.00
	Bank Charges	72	£ -	£ 72.00
	Playing Field Inspection	70	£ -	£ 70.00
	Playing Field Equipment	0	£ -	£ -
	Election cost	0	£ -	£ -
	TOTAL	7658	£ 1,423.56	£ 6,234.44
	GRAND TOTAL	11679	£ 2,178.94	£ 9,500.06
	Total VAT reclaim		£ 64.55	
	TOTAL in Expenditure account		£ 2,243.49	

STPC FINANCE APRIL & MAY 2024 PAYMENTS**Income: Precept 1st. Instalment £1056.71p:**

Chq No.	Payee	Cost	VAT	Total	STPC Ref. No.
DD	British Gas - Street lighting	£ 172.38	£ 8.62	£ 181.00	1
DD	British Gas - Street lighting	£ 96.55	£ 4.83	£ 101.38	2
BACS	British Gas - Street lighting	£ 8.45	£ 0.42	£ 8.87	3
BACS Apr '24	Kevin B. Money - Clerk payment	£ 241.66	£ -	£ 241.66	4
BACS Apr '24	HMRC payment	£ 60.40	£ -	£ 60.40	5
BACS May '24	Kevin B. Money - Clerk payment	£ 241.66	£ -	£ 241.66	6
BACS May '24	HMRC payment	£ 60.40	£ -	£ 60.40	7
BACS 17580	EALC / NALC subscription 2024/2025	£ 166.64	£ -	£ 166.64	8
BACS 6073	MSJ Garwood - Grass cutting	£ 207.37	£ 41.47	£ 248.84	9
BACS 2024/2025	Zurich Insurance - 2024-2025	£ 462.17	£ -	£ 462.17	10
BACS 2024-023	STVH - Meeting cost 31.03.24	£ 10.00	£ -	£ 10.00	11
BACS 2022/2023	M. Lawson - Internal Audit	£ 80.00	£ -	£ 80.00	12
BACS	Amazon - Office expenses + Audit	£ 71.26	£ 9.21	£ 80.47	13
BACS Donation	Steeple Community Group 2024-25	£ 300.00	£ -	£ 300.00	14
		TOTAL: £ 2,178.94	£ 64.55	£ 2,243.49	

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 2

To be completed only by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other smaller authorities* where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, that meet the qualifying criteria, and that wish to CERTIFY themselves as EXEMPT from a limited assurance review

Guidance notes on completing Form 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less **must**, after the end of each financial year, complete Form 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices*, unless the authority:
 - a) does not meet the qualifying criteria for exemption; or
 - b) does not wish to certify itself as exempt
2. Smaller authorities where the higher of all gross annual income or gross annual expenditure **does not exceed** £25,000 and that meet the qualifying criteria as set out in the Certificate of Exemption **are able to declare themselves exempt** from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review **provided** the authority **completes**:
 - a) The **Certificate of Exemption**, page 3 and returns a copy of it to the external auditor **either** by email **or** by post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Failure to do so will result in reminder letter(s) for which the Authority will be charged £40 +VAT for each letter; and
 - b) The **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Form 2)** which is made up of:
 - c) **Annual Internal Audit Report (page 4)** must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - d) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement (page 5)** must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - e) **Section 2 – Accounting Statements (page 6)** must be completed and approved by the authority.**NOTE: Authorities certifying themselves as exempt SHOULD NOT send the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor.**
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement **before** approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.

Publication Requirements

Smaller authorities **must** publish various documents on a publicly available website as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. These include:

- **Certificate of Exemption**, page 3
- **Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24**, page 4
- **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, page 5
- **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24**, page 6
- Analysis of variances
- Bank reconciliation
- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Limited Assurance Review

Any smaller authority may request a limited assurance review. If so, the authority should not certify itself as exempt or complete the Certificate of Exemption. Instead it should complete Form 3 of the AGAR 2023/24 and return it to the external auditor together with the supporting documentation requested by the external auditor. The cost to the authority for the review will be **£210 +VAT**.

Provided that the authority certifies itself as exempt, and completes and publishes the documents listed under 'Publication Requirements', there is no requirement for the authority to have a review.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24, Sections 1 and 2

- An authority that wishes to declare itself exempt from the requirement for a limited assurance review must do so at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2024. It should not submit its Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor. However, as part of a more proportionate regime, the authority **must** comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- The Certificate of Exemption must be returned to the external auditor no later than **30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT for each letter.
- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR and the Certificate of Exemption. Proper Practices are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness at the meeting at which it is signed off.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- The authority must publish numerical and narrative explanations for significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 6**. Guidance is provided in the *Practitioners' Guide** which may assist.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish, on the authority website/webpage, the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes been completed?	✓	
	Have the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights been published?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation available for publication?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Is an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 available, should a question be raised by a local elector and/or an interested party?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? (<i>Local Councils only</i>)		

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices,** can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

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.

STEEPLE 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:

£12,894 R AMOUNT £00,000

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2023/24:

£12,528 R AMOUNT £00,000

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

08/05/2024

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

08/05/2024

Signed by Chair

Date

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

08/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Generic email address of Authority

steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com

GENERIC EMAIL ADDRESS

Telephone number

07810781509

NUMBER

*Published web address

https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil/

PUBLISHED WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

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.

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

STEEPLE PARISH COUNCIL

<https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil/> ABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

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.			N/A
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) 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

10/04/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

MICHAEL LAWSON

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

M Lawson

Date

10/04/2024

*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).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

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

*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:

08/05/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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
✓	

<https://e-voice.org.uk/steepleparishcouncil/> /

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

STEEPLE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.</i>
1. Balances brought forward	3,942	8,295	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	10,531	11,064	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,336	1,830	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	2,648	3,355	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	5,866	9,173	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	8,295	8,660	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	8,295	8,660	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	25,682	25,682	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

08/05/2024

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

08/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Smaller authority name: **Steeple 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
<p>1. Date of announcement 8th. May 2024 (a)</p> <p>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:</p> <p>(b) Kevin B. Money – Parish Clerk / RFO 7 Roach Vale Colchester Essex CO4 3YN Tel: 07810781509 email: steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com</p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>Monday 3 June 2024</u></p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>Friday 12 July 2024</u></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 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:</p> <p>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 15 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD sba@pkf-l.com</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Kevin B. Money – Parish Clerk / RFO</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 include the first 10 working days of July.</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>

Contact details

Name of smaller authority: **Steeple Parish Council**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only) **Maldon Essex**

Please complete this form and send it back to us with the AGAR or exemption certificate

	Clerk/RFO (Main contact)	Chair
Name	Kevin B. Money	Cllr Kay Davey
Address	7 Roach Vale Colchester Essex CO4 3YN	c/o 7 Roach Vale Colchester Essex CO4 3YN
Daytime telephone number		
Mobile telephone number	07810781509	07810781509
Email address	steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com	steepleparishcouncil@gmail.com