

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

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

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

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 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?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

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

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

WWW.curdridge-pc.gov.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.			N/A NONE
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

8/4/24

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

P. REYNOLDS F. MAAT.

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

P. Reynolds

Date

8/4/24

***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:

CURDRIDGE 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
			✓

***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:

18/04/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

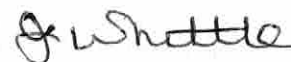
24.78.4

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

Chair



Clerk



www.curdridge-pc.gov.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	159,571	168,882	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	70,409	61,775	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	7,006	14,851	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	20,362	28,918	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	NIL	NIL	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	47,742	35,689	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	168,882	180,901	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	168,882	180,901	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	142,457	149,543	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	NIL	NIL	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

A Whittle

Date

18/04/2024

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

18/04/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

24.78.5

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

E. J. [Signature]

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

Contact details

Name of smaller authority: Curdridge Parish Council

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): Hampshire

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

	Clerk/RFO (Main contact)	Chair
Name	*Mrs Jennifer Whittle *NB: leaving 26 April 2024	Cllr Eric Bodger
Address	2 Berkeley Gardens Hedge End Southampton Hampshire SO30 0QW <u>NB: from 26 April 2024:</u> Nicki Oliver, Heatherdene Turkey Island Shedfield SO32 2JE	Wangfield Farm House Wangfield Lane Curdridge Southampton Hampshire SO32 2DA
Daytime telephone number	07858 49191 <u>NB from 26 April 2024:</u> 07961 213750	01489 782745
Mobile telephone number	07858 491919 <u>NB: from 26 April 2024:</u> 07961 213750	07835 001028
Email address	clerk@curdridge-pc.org.uk NB: this will remain unchanged	cllr.bodger.cpc@gmail.com

CONFLICT OF INTEREST WITH BDO LLP

To be completed annually and minuted at a meeting of the smaller authority.

Name of Smaller Authority	CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL
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I confirm that there are no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.

I confirm the following conflicts of interest (please detail below:

This was confirmed and minuted at the following meeting:

Date of Meeting	Minute Reference
18 APRIL 2024	24.78.3

Signed (Clerk/RFO)

Print Name MRS JENNIFER WHITTLE

Signed (Chair) 

Print Name CLLR ERIC BODGER



Curdridge Parish Council

2 Berkley Gardens,
Hedge End,
Southampton,
SO30 0QW

Telephone: 01489 786557

Email: clerk.curdridge@parish.hants.gov.uk

Parish Council Manager :
Mrs Jennifer Whittle

CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL VARIANCES 2023-2024

Box 3 Other Receipts – Increased by £7.845.00 (112%)

Increases for:

CIL monies received from Winchester City Council - £6,798.00;

Hampshire County Council County Councillor Grant - £1,000.00;

Sundry receipts - £47.00.

Box 4 Staff Costs – Increased by £8556.00 (42%)

Increases for:

Salary inflationary increase plus associated increased tax, NI and pension contributions;

(Only contracted 16 hours per week) - overtime requirements for updating the old website and checking through whole new website for accuracy (website updates/maintenance now transferred to Smart Marketing); Initial phase of public consultation notices/circulars associated with the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan (administration of the public consultation process now transferred to Smart Marketing); Preparation of comprehensive CPC Administration Guidance Notes and improvement and updating of electronic and paper filing systems in preparation for handover to a new Parish Clerk;

Payment for accrued annual leave unable to be taken due to Covid lockdown and increased workload (due to lone working).

NB £5,000.00 of the above increase absorbed by some of the ear-marked funds for Staffing Budget under-spends by current Clerk in previous financial years (due to not employing a locum clerk to cover annual leave and taking minimal sick leave during 9 years of employment).

Box 6 All Other Payments – Decreased £13,053 (-25%)

Decrease spending:

2022-2023 – additional assets purchased £16,000, less 2 additional Speed Limit

Reminder signs purchased 2023/2024 £7086 – overall decrease of £9,514 as there were no emergency tree work costs, Parish Quay jetty removal costs and car park re-surfacing in 2023/2024.

CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL EAR-MARKED FUNDS FROM RESERVES/UNDER SPENDS - (UPDATED APRIL 2024 FOR AUDIT RETURN 2023-2024)	
NB: ALL SPENDS RELATING TO THESE FUNDS MUST STILL BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL PRIOR TO BECOMING OFFICIAL	
Botley to Bishops Waltham Trail (one-off donation from CPC), subject to the whole trail route being viable - alternative route being sought	£10,000.00
Reading Room Management - Capital and H&S Projects. Awaiting outcome of building investigations.	£10,000.00
Highways Road Safety Projects (primarily for reduced speed limits & speed reduction measures within the parish due to high parishioner demand)	£5,000.00
Public Transport Initiatives within the parish - set aside from CPC Minibus sale proceeds - improved bus stops and pedestrian routes to public transport etc	£10,685.00
SLR/Speedwatch - future replacement equipment and accessories (new ground sockets, posts, batteries etc)	£2,000.00
Parish Notice Boards & Benches (wood to composite) - replacement when required (Cemetery Car Park Notice Board probably first)	£10,000.00
Election Expenses - contingency fund	£2,000.00
Street Lights (set aside for replacements when required as advised/recommended by HCC)	£4,000.00
Legal & Professional fees - contingency fund (inc. N. Whiteley boundary review & WCC Local Plan professional advice)	£5,000.00
Allotment Recreation revised project - re-wilding Allotment Recreation (once trial period has finished) & general site improvements	£2,000.00
Highways -set aside for Village Gates (replacements as required)	£3,000.00
Cemetery Car Park surface replacement/repairs (if this becomes necessary due to H&S requirements)	£15,000.00
Cemetery/Glebe Field - set up new Cremation Interment area (lower cemetery); new memorial plaque area; viewing area and rewilding at Glebe Field	£3,000.00
Cricketers Pond - renovation and future management	£5,000.00
Staffing Contingencies - overtime, sickness cover, additional admin. etc (set aside from staffing budget under-spend) (£5000 used 23/24 already deducted from total)	£15,000.00
Emergency tree works - standing contingency fund for H&S purposes (need to add to this fund in future)	£5,000.00
Parish Vision Statement	£10,000.00
Replacement computer, printer when required	£500.00
TOTAL OF EAR-MARKED FUNDS:	£117,185.00
PLUS - CURDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL (ANNUAL GRANTS) - EAR-MARKED FUNDS	
Reading Room - Annual support grant due to public demand to retain this ageing facility - 2023-2024 (NB: 2024-2025 financial year onwards adjust to £5,000!)	£2,500
Curdridge Parish Magazine (to include Curdridge Parish Council Articles)	£500
TOTAL GRANTS EAR-MARKED FUNDS WITHIN CURRENT BUDGET 2023-2024	£3,000
TOTAL EAR-MARKED INCLUDING RESERVES/UNDER-SPENDS AND ANNUAL GRANTS	
	£120,185.00