

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2022/23 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 2023, 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 2023 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2023** notifying the external auditor.

BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2022/23, 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 2022/23:

£4331.28

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2022/23:

£3767.67

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 2019
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2021/22), 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notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice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under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration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.

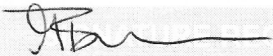
If the above statements apply and the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000, then the Certificate of Exemption can be signed and a copy submitted to the external auditor **either** by email **or** by post (not both).

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 2023.

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

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer

Date



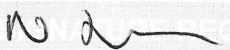
16/5/2023

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

16/5/2023

Signed by Chairman

Date



16.5.2023

as recorded in minute reference:

MIN 11 d)

Generic email address of Authority

Telephone number

maggieoldbam@aol.com

0193 782858

*Published web address

www.bourton-oxon.org.uk

ONLY this Certificate of Exemption should be returned EITHER by email OR by post (not both) as soon as possible after certification to your external auditor but no later than 30

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL (OXON)

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS
bourton-oxon.org.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2023, 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 2022/23 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.			NOT USED
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 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 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 2022-23 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2021-22 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 2021/22 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

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YYYY 13/6/23

ELEANOR S. GREENE ICPA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Eleanor S. Greene

Date

13/6/23

*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).

Do the Numbers Limited

13th June 2023

Maggie Brown, Clerk
Bourton Parish Council

Dear Maggie,

Subject: Review of matters arising from Internal Audit for 31 March 2023

Following my visit today, please find below the list of matters arising.

It was pleasing to see such progress on the matters in the 2022 report.

The internal audit was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 and the guidance and instruction in the Practitioners Guide 2023

Test	Matter arising	Recommended Action
A	<i>Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the year</i>	
Grants	The council may be asked to support the Village Hall in future.	A clear, transparent and equitable form and policy should be approved and published – <u>example here</u>
B	<i>This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for</i>	
Standard documents	It is an AGAR requirement that the Financial Regulations and Standing orders are reviewed every year – even if unchanged.	Please ensure that this is done at the next meeting.
C	<i>This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
D	<i>The precept budget resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, the reserves were appropriate</i>	
Reserves	The reserves of the council, even after allowing for planned projects, are higher than the guidance of 12 months precept. However the small values involved should be taken into account.	The council needs to balance resilience (the need to undertake an emergency project) with planned project and the sunk cost to residents.
E	<i>Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
F	<i>Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for</i>	
	Not applicable to this Council	
G	<i>Salaries to employees and allowances to members we paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
H	<i>Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
I	<i>Periodic Bank reconciliations were carried out during the year</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
J	<i>Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct</i>	

	<i>accounting basis, agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail and debtors and creditors recorded.</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
K	<i>Certified Exempt in prior year</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
L	<i>Transparency Code</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
M	<i>Public Rights</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
N	<i>Publication of prior year AGAR</i>	
	The records of the Council comply	with this test
O	<i>Trust funds</i>	
	Not applicable to this Council	
P	<i>Borrowing</i>	
	Not applicable to this Council	

Please find attached my invoice for the agreed fee.

If either you or your members have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Eleanor S Greene

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

BOURTON 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.	YES		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.	YES		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.	YES		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.	YES		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.	YES		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.	YES		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.	YES		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.	YES		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
			NIA

*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:

20/06/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

6 d)

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

Chairman

Clerk

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

BOURTON-OXON.ORG.UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

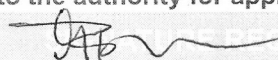
BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	8453	8971	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	3500	3850	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	115	481	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	1348	1936	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	1749	1831	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	8971	9535	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	8971	9535	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	6766	6166	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	—	—	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)			N/A	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

 SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

20/06/2023

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

 DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE (6e)

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

 SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Explanation for 'high' reserves		£	£	£	£
(Please complete the highlighted boxes.)					
Box 7 is more than twice Box 2 because the authority held the following breakdown of reserves at the year end:					
Earmarked reserves:					
Reserve 1					
Reserve 2					3000 held for traffic calming
Reserve 3					
Reserve 4					
Reserve 5					
				0	
General reserve			9535		
				9535	
Total reserves (must agree to Box 7)					9535
Box 7 per Annual Return					9,535
Difference					0

(Please complete the highlighted boxes.)

Box 7 is more than twice Box 2 because the authority held the following breakdown of reserves at the year end:

	£	£	£
Earmarked reserves:			
Reserve 1			
Reserve 2			
Reserve 3			
Reserve 4			
Reserve 5			
		0	
General reserve		9535	
		9535	
Total reserves (must agree to Box 7)		9535	
Box 7 per Annual Return		9,535	
Difference		0	

BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL BANK RECONCILIATION 31 MARCH 2023						
BANK RECONCILIATION				31-Mar-23		
Santander a/c 340583282						
Balance Per Bank 31 March 2023				9162.62	Opening balance	8599
				0		4331
				0		-3767
				0		9162
Reconciliation to Cash Book				<u>9162.62</u>		
Santander a/c 455023484						
Balance Per Bank 31 March 2023				372.69		
Total of funds held in bank 31 March 2023				<u>9535.31</u>		
Chairman					RFO	
(signed)					(signed)	
Date: 20.6.23					Date	20.6.23

Smaller authority name: BOURTON 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 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement <u>TUESDAY 27 JUNE 2023</u> (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 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 2022, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) <u>Mrs Maggie Brown</u> <u>The Old Barn, Bourton</u> <u>01793 782858</u></p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 2023</u></p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST 2023</u> [the 30th working day after (c) above]</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>Moore (Ref RD/hd) Rutland House, Minerva Business Park, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6PZ</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) <u>MAGGIE BROWN</u></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 extends for a single period of 30 working days (inclusive) ending on the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must also 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>

CLERK + RESPONSIBLE
FINANCIAL OFFICER

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

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

The basic position

By law, any interested person has the right to inspect the accounting records of smaller authorities. If you are a local government elector or registered to vote in the local councils' elections, then you are able to ask questions about the accounts and object to them.

The right to inspect the accounting records

When your council has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year, they must advertise that they are available for people to inspect. You must then provide the council with reasonable notice of your intentions. Following this, by arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records and supporting documents. You may be required to pay a copying charge.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

If you have any questions regarding the accounting records, you should first ask your smaller authority. This must be done during the 30-day period for the exercise of public rights. You may also ask the appointed auditor questions about an item in the accounting records. However, the auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions so is limited with their response. To avoid any confusion, it is advised that you put your questions in writing.

The right to make objections

Should you view something as unlawful or believe there are matters of wider concern in the accounts, you may wish to object. If you are a local government elector, you have the right to ask the external auditor to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item is contrary to the law and should be reported as a matter of public interest. This must be done by telling the appointed auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you believe it to be unlawful or think a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide clear evidence to support your objection, and this should be done in writing and the copied to the council.

You should not use the 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. Complaints of this nature should be taken to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor.

A final word

Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, the auditor must consider the cost that will be involved. They will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision, you may have to pay for the action yourself.