

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of **Whitnash Town Council**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

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 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor report 2022/23

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 the 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.

The Internal Auditor identified that the Council did not comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the 2021/22 financial year. The Council should therefore have answered 'No' to Assertion 4 of Section 1 of the AGAR but they have incorrectly given a 'Yes' answer.

The Council has sent in a fixed asset register. The value shown in Box 9 did not accord with the figures provided. Based on these findings we believe the balances in box 9 for each year is not an accurate reflection of the Fixed Asset Register and therefore assertions 1 and 3 should have been answered 'No'. The council should bring their records up to date.

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

Incomplete information received with regards to reserves breakdown between general and earmarked. The council should in future ensure that amounts are scheduled in their entirety and that they sum to the figure provided at box 7.

Incomplete information received with regards to reconciliation between boxes 7 and 8 of Section 2 and significant variances. The council should in future ensure that significant variances are provided with the initial submission data for review which numerically explain the change in figures between the two years. Explanations have been received and are acceptable, so we have no further concerns in this area.

There is a trivial rounding error in each column when summed. When rounding the numbers for the Return care should be taken to ensure they continue to sum to the total provided at box 7 and that this matches or reconciles to box 8 as required.

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Moore', written over a horizontal line.

Date

26/09/2023

Authority Name: WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL

NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF ANNUAL AUDIT
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

- 1 The audit of accounts for WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL for the year ended 31 March 2023 has been completed and the accounts have been published.**
- 2 The Annual Return is available for inspection by any local government elector in the area of WHITNASH on application to:**
 - (a) Town Clerk
Jennifer Mason**
 - (b) Address
Whitnash Town Council
Whitnash Civic Centre & Library
Acre Close
Whitnash
CV31 2ND**
 - (c) (Telephone/email, and hours and arrangements to view)
Telephone: 01926 470394
Email: jenny.mason@whitnashtowncouncil.gov.uk
Arrangements to view: Thursdays between hours of 10h00 and 12h00**
- 3 Copies will be provided to any person on payment of £0.50 for each copy of the Annual Return**

Announcement made by Clerk:

Jennifer Mason

Date of Announcement:

27th September 2023

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

EN Whitnash Town 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	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:

15/06/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

10/23

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman

Clerk




SIGNATURE REQUIRED

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

EN Whitnash Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,175,270	693,250	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	234,409	284,394	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	773,858	145,336	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	103,576	121,447	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	16,151	15,892	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	1,370,560	246,674	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	693,250	738,966	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	611,424	737,511	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	2,531,084	2,673,306	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	230,000	220,000	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

15/05/2023

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

15/06/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

11/23

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED