LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Monday 15th May, 2023

Time: Immediately following Annual Parish Meeting (7:30p.m.)

Venue: Lower Withington Parish Hall

E.M.Maddock

Dr. E. M. Maddock PSLCC,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. Dated 4th May, 2023

In order to keep councillors and other members of the public safe, please do not attend the meeting if you are feeling unwell for any reason or if you have been in contact with anyone who has Covid, flu or Covid/flu symptoms.

All attendees will be expected to respect social distancing preferences of other attendees.

AGENDA

To Members of Lower Withington Parish Council,

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Parish Council Meeting, as shown above, to consider and determine the following business:

1. **Election of Chairman**
   (a) To elect a Chairman for the 2023/24 civic year.
   (b) To receive the newly elected Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Declarations of Acceptance of Office**
   (a) To receive declarations of acceptance of office from each elected Member.
   (b) To formally approve the making of declarations of acceptance of office at the next meeting for any elected Members not present at the meeting.
4. **Election of Vice Chairman**
   (a) To elect a Vice Chairman for the 2023/24 civic year.
5. **Declarations of Interest**
   (a) To receive Declarations of Interest in any items on the agenda.
   (b) To review existing Registrations of Interests forms and determine arrangements for updates where required.
6. **Minutes**
   (a) To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 27th March, 2023 as a correct record.
7. **Public Forum for Questions**
   (a) To receive questions from members of the public.

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8. Reports from External Organisations

(a) Cheshire East Ward Member

i. To note the election of a new Cheshire East Ward Member.

ii. To receive, if available, a report on items of interest to the Parish Council.

(b) Gawsworth Ward Policing Team

i. To receive a report on matters of interest / concern within the Parish.

(c) To receive a report from the Parish Council Network Meeting held 28th March, 2023 regarding HS2.

(d) To receive a report from the Manchester Airport Parish Council Forum meeting held 19th April, 2023.

9. Finance

(a) To receive and consider the Financial Statement 2023/24 as at 15th May, 2023. (Appendix A)

(b) To note receipts as listed at Appendix B.

(c) To approve the payments listed at Appendix C.

(d) To receive and consider grant request from Lower Withington Parish Hall.

(e) Internal Audit 2022/23

i. To receive the Internal Audit Report contained within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. (Appendix D)

ii. To receive and consider the Internal Audit Action Plan and determine any actions required in relation thereto. (Appendix E)

(f) Final Accounts and Audit Arrangements 2022/23

i. To consider and approve the signing of the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 (Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return). (Appendix F)

ii. To approve and adopt the 2022/23 Final Accounts and Supporting Notes. (Appendix G)

iii. To approve the signing of the Accounting Statements 2022/23 (Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return). (Appendix H)

iv. To approve the signing of the Certificate of Exemption from Limited Assurance Review contained within the Part 2 Annual Governance and Accountability Return for submission to the External Auditors. (Appendix I)

(g) To review and approve earmarked reserves currently held by the Parish Council.

(h) Banking Arrangements

i. To review any changes required to the authorised signatories.

ii. To review and approve existing direct debit payment arrangements.

iii. To note that no standing order arrangements are currently in place.

(i) To confirm the actions of the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer in submitting a VAT reclaim to HMRC in the sum of £519.96.

(j) To consider and approve the financial risk assessment 2023/24. (Appendix J)

10. Annual Review of Parish Council administrative matters

(a) To consider renewing the current scheme of delegated authority for the 2023/24 civic year for implementation during periods when holding meetings would present a risk to those attending. (Appendix K)

(b) To review and approve standing orders and financial regulations.

(c) To record that the Parish Council is eligible to exercise the general power of competence.

(d) Asset management

i. To review the inventory of Parish Council assets and confirm insurance requirements in respect of all insurable risks.

ii. To receive and consider the asset risk assessment and determine any actions required in relation thereto. (Appendix L)

(e) To review and confirm scope of insurance cover held by Parish Council.

(f) To review subscriptions to other bodies.

(g) To review and approve the Parish Council complaints procedure (Appendix M)

(h) To review and approve the Parish Council policies relating to information handling.

(i) To note that no payments were made in 2022/23 under s.137 provisions or the general power of competence.

(j) To confirm the dates of Parish Council meetings for the 2023/24 civic year. (Appendix N)

(k) To receive and consider, if available, risk assessments relating to future litter picking events and newsletter distribution activities.

11. Planning Applications

(a) To note recent planning decisions issued by Cheshire East Council. (Appendix O)

(b) To consider the following planning applications -

i. 23/1223M – Dingle Bank Farm, Holmes Chapel Road, Lower Withington. SK11 9DP
Advertisement consent for a non illuminated wall mounted aluminium tray sign.

ii. 23/1613M – Foden Bank Barn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD
Conversion of existing gym/office/storage outbuilding to residential annexe.

iii. 23/1638M – Thorn Tree Farm, Salters Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DY
Single storey rear kitchen extension.

iv. Any applications received following issue of Agenda may be included for discussion if required.

12. Correspondence

(a) To consider specific correspondence received by the Parish Council since the date of the last ordinary meeting and determine such actions as Members consider appropriate thereto -

i. Nether Alderley Parish Council – Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 consultation.

ii. Cheshire East Council – Financial contributions (Commuted Sums). (Appendix P)

iii. Airband – Superfast broadband scheme for Lower Withington.

13. Highway Maintenance and Enhancements

(a) To receive updates on reported highway matters including:

i. Dislodged coping stone and fallen tree on bridge at Catchpenny Lane.

ii. Holes in road at junction of Whisterfield Lane and Chapel Lane.

iii. Polluted run-off entering ditch along Catchpenny Lane.

iv. Sunken manhole at Farm Lane (opposite to church).

v. Rigbys Lane - deteriorating carriageway surface.
vi. Potholes on Long Shoot Road.
vii. Knocked down chevron sign near junction of Bomish Lane with A535.
viii. Holes at carriageway edges along several lanes.
ix. Proposal for double white lines on A535 near to junction with Catchpenny Lane.
x. Proposal for quiet lane status at Lapwing Lane (north).

(b) To receive new highway maintenance matters for attention from Members.
(c) To receive, if available, information relating to village gateways.

14. Parish Matters

(a) To receive any updates available from the Jodrell Bank Observatory World Heritage Site Steering Group.
(b) To receive an update relating to the community newsletter.

15. Elections 2023

(a) To note the outcome of the Parish Council election 2023.
(b) To consider options relating to the co-option of Members to fill current vacancies.

16. Matters for inclusion on next/future meeting agenda

(a) Several carried forward from previous meetings.

17. Dates of next meeting

(a) See item 10(j).

To consider passing a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

18. Matters for consideration including those transferred from above items (as required)

E.M.Maddock

Dr. E. M. Maddock PSLCC,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. Dated 4th May, 2023

For further information please contact: Tel: 01477 571444 Email: clerk@lowerwithington.com

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX A

Financial Statement – 2023/24 as at 15th May, 2023					
Actual 2022/23 £	**Details**	**2023/24 Budget £**	**Actual to Apr. 23 £**	**Agenda May 23 £**	**Budget Balance £**
	Receipts				
9,807.00	Precept	10,892.00	0.00		10,892.00
1,761.00	Balances	2,038.00	0.00		0.00
67.99	Investment interest		0.00		0.00
0.00	Sale of assets		0.00		0.00
0.00	Grants, donations & refunds		0.00		0.00
41.07	VAT refund		0.00		38.00
11,677.06	**Total receipts**	**12,930.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**10,930.00**
	Payments				
3,999.67	Salary (Clerk)	4,335.00	0.00	679.04	3,655.96
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00	0.00		0.00
275.00	Allowances (Clerk)	325.00	0.00		325.00
98.42	Administration	300.00	0.00		300.00
0.00	Chairman/Member allowances	0.00	0.00		0.00
171.00	Audit fees (internal & external)	185.00	0.00	185.00	0.00
300.00	Insurance	350.00	0.00	300.00	50.00
2,650.36	Grants/Donations (inc. s.137)	2,600.00	0.00		2,600.00
601.00	Website	220.00	0.00	5.00	215.00
197.00	Subscriptions/affiliation fees	330.00	0.00	166.50	163.50
190.00	Room hire	325.00	0.00		325.00
0.00	Training	210.00	0.00		210.00
0.00	Professional Services	750.00	0.00		750.00
1,583.50	Assets – purchase	1,000.00	0.00		1,000.00
266.00	Assets – maintenance	1,500.00	0.00		1,500.00
825.15	Contingency	500.00	0.00		500.00
519.96	VAT		0.00	38.00	
11,677.06	**Total payments**	**12,930.00**	**0.00**	**1,373.54**	**11,594.46**

Cash/Bank reconciliation	**01/04/23**	**01/04/23**	**15/05/23**	**31/03/24**
Balance B/Fwd	31,395.82	31,395.82	31,395.82	30,022.28
Add total receipts	12,930.00	0.00	0.00	10,930.00
Less total payments	12,930.00	0.00	1,373.54	11,594.46
Balance C/Fwd	31,395.82	31,395.82	30,022.28	29,357.82
Cumulative balances	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**
	01/04/23	**01/04/23**	**15/05/23**	**31/03/24**
General funds	14,072.16	14,072.16	12,698.62	12,034.16
Earmarked reserves	17,323.66	17,323.66	17,323.66	17,323.66
	31,395.82	31,395.82	30,022.28	29,357.82

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Cash/Bank Reconciliation as at 15th May 2023

Cash				
Balance brought forward 01/04/23				
Current Account		15,873.72		
Business Reserve Account		15,522.10		
		31,395.82		
Plus receipts		0.00		
Less payments		1,373.54		
Balance carried forward 15/05/23:		30,022.28		
Bank (NatWest)				
Business Reserve Account		15,522.10		01/04/23
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			15,522.10	15/05/23
Current Account		16,580.72		01/04/23
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
2022/23	-707.00			
For approval	-1,373.54			
		-2,080.54		
			14,500.18	15/05/23
Total bank balances 15/05/23			30,022.28	

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX B

Receipts

NatWest Bank plc	£10.86	Gross interest – January, 2023
NatWest Bank plc	£10.70	Gross interest – February, 2023
NatWest Bank plc	£13.17	Gross interest – March 2023

[Above receipts received in 2022/23]

APPENDIX C

Payments for approval

Direct Debit	aql ltd.	£6.00	Mail forwarding fee
Cheque No 000551	E. M. Maddock	£543.24	Salary: Apr.-May, 2023
Cheque No 000552	H.M. Revenue & Customs	£135.80	Employee income tax
Cheque No 000553	JDH Business Services Ltd.	£222.00	Internal audit fee 2022/23
Cheque No 000554	Zurich Municipal	£300.00	Insurance premium 2023/24
Cheque No 000555	Cheshire Association of Local Councils	£166.50	Affiliation fee 2023/24

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX D

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

Lower Withington Parish Council

https://www.lowerwithington.com

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.	N/A	no petty cash held	
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: DD/MM/YYYY 13/04/2023

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: JDH BUSINESS SERVICES LTD

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: [signature]

Date: 13/04/2023

*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).

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX E

INTERNAL AUDIT 2022/23
ACTION PLAN

ISSUE: General reserves at the year end were significantly in excess of 100% of the precept level. Sector guidance is that councils should aim for a general reserve level of between 25% and 100% of the precept or net operating expenditure. The practitioners Guide also notes this recommended level of reserves.

RECOMMENDATION: The council should review the level of general reserves during the budget setting process with reference to sector guidance.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE:

The above issue is received and duly noted. Reserves were reviewed during the 2023/24 budget setting process and earmarked reserves are to be reviewed at the May 2023 meeting. Further reviews of general and earmarked reserves will take place during the budget setting process in November 2023.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX F

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

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

9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	*has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

*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:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Information required by the Transparency Code *(not part of the Annual Governance Statement)*	Yes	No
The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.		

https://lowerwithington.com/ ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

APPENDIX G

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Summary Receipts & Payments Account for the year ended 31st March, 2023

2021/22 £.	Receipts	2022/23 £.
10,375.00	Precept	9,807.00
1.56	Investment Interest	67.99
110.00	Grants & Donations	0.00
1,061.87	V.A.T. Refund	41.07
11,548.43	Total Receipts	9,916.06
	Payments	
3,645.40	Salary (Clerk)	3,999.67
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00
250.00	Allowances (Clerk)	275.00
98.81	Administration	98.42
0.00	Member Allowances	0.00
153.72	Audit Fees (internal & external)	171.00
204.19	Insurance	300.00
700.00	Grants / Donations - (inc. Sect. 137)	2,650.36
20.00	Website	601.00
200.60	Subscriptions / Affiliation Fees	197.00
0.00	Room Hire	190.00
25.00	Training	0.00
0.00	Professional Services	0.00
0.00	Assets - Purchase	1,583.50
298.00	Assets - Maintenance	266.00
0.00	Contingency	825.15
41.07	V.A.T.	519.96
5,636.79	Total Payments	11,677.06

27,245.18	Balance B/Fwd. 01/04/22	33,156.82
11,548.43	Add Total Receipts	9,916.06
-5,636.79	Less Total Payments	-11,677.06
33,156.82	Balance C/Fwd. 31/03/23	31,395.82
	Analysis of Cumulative Funds	
15,454.11	NatWest Business Reserve Account	15,522.10
17,702.71	NatWest Bank Current Account	15,873.72
33,156.82	Total	31,395.82
	Above Funds held for the following purposes:-	
11,833.16	General Funds	14,072.16
21,323.66	Earmarked Reserves	17,323.66
0.00	Capital Reserves	0.00
33,156.82		31,395.82

The above Statement represents fairly the financial position of the Lower Withington Parish Council as at 31st March, 2023 and reflects its receipts and payments during the year.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
SUPPORTING NOTES - 2022/23

Assets

During the year the following assets were purchased at the cost shown:-

Defibrillator & Cabinet	1,583.50
	£1,583.50

During the year the following assets were disposed of for the amount shown:- None.

At the 31st March, 2023 the following assets were held:-

Notice Boards (3)	1,000.00
Village Nameplate Signs (2)	107.44
Speed Indicator Device (SID) (2)	4,035.00
Defibrillator (1)	1,378.00
Plaque - Defibrillator (1)	52.64
Owl Tree Carving	600.00
Laptop Computer	332.50
Parish Boundary Signs (2)	154.28
Football Goal Posts (2)	116.58
Notice Board (1)	1,222.64
Litter picking equipment	220.93
Christmas lights	328.73
Defibrillator & Cabinet	1,583.50
	£11,132.24

Leases At the year end the following leases were in operation:- None.

Borrowings

As at close of business on 31st March, 2023 the following loans to the Council were outstanding:- None.

Debts At the year end debts of £519.96 (VAT reclaim) were outstanding and due to the Council.

Capital Reserves None.

Earmarked Reserves

Democratic Services Fund	2,000.00
Transparency Code Grant	118.00
Dicklow Cob Pathway Project Grant	2,205.66
Telephone Kiosk Project	3,000.00
Highway Safety Schemes Fund	5,000.00
Local Organisation Investment Fund	5,000.00
	£17,323.66

Tenancies

During the year the following tenancies were held:- None.

Section 137 Payments

The limit for spending under Sect. 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for this Council in the year of account was £3,969.00 and payments made were:- None

Agency Work During the year the Council undertook the following agency work on behalf of other local authorities:- None.

Advertising and Publicity

The following costs for advertising and publicity were incurred during the year:- None.

Pensions For the year of account the Council made no contribution to staff pensions.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX H

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	*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.*
1. Balances brought forward	27,245	33,157	*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	10,375	9,807	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,173	109	*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	3,645	4,000	*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	1,991	7,677	*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	33,157	31,396	*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	33,157	31,396	*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	9,549	11,132	*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	0	0	*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 DD/MM/YYYY

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX I

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.

LOWER WITHINGTON 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:	£9,916 ER AMOUNT £00,000
Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2022/23:	£11,677 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 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	I confirm that this Certificate of Exemption was approved by this authority on this date:	DD/MM/YYYY
SIGNATURE REQUIRED	DD/MM/YYYY		
Signed by Chairman	Date	as recorded in minute reference:	
SIGNATURE REQUIRED	DD/MM/YYYY	MINUTE REFERENCE	

Generic email address of Authority	Telephone number
clerk@lowerwithington.com WNED GENERIC EMAIL ADDRESS	01477 571444 E NUMBER

*Published web address

https://lowerwithington.com/ ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE 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 2023. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX J

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT - 2023/24

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance.	L	In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chairman (or other nominated Member) may perform the necessary duties.	Existing procedure adequate. Review when necessary.
	Loss of paper/electronic records.	M	Archive material currently held by Members. Current files and records kept at the Clerk's home. Regular backup of electronic files is made. Paper documents stored in metal filing cabinets.	Existing procedure adequate.
Precept	Adequacy of precept for Council to carry out its Statutory duties.	H	Budgetary Control statement presented to Council at each meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Requirements not submitted to CEC.	L	Full Minute - RFO to follow up.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Amount not received from CEC.	L	RFO to confirm receipt and Minute at next Meeting of Council.	Existing procedure adequate.
Financial records	Inadequate records.	L	Financial Regulations specify requirements of Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations 2023/24.
	Financial irregularities.	L	Internal Audit of accounts by competent, independent person. Regular financial reports are presented to Council. Cheque signatories are separate from person raising the cheque.	Existing procedure adequate. Review bank signatories when change of Councillors/circumstances.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks.	L	Bank reconciliation produced at each meeting.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations 2023/24.
	Bank mistakes.	L	RFO check all bank statements against Council records and query errors immediately.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Loss.	L	RFO check all bank statements against Council records and query inconsistencies immediately.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Charges.	L	RFO check adequate funds prior to issuing cheques. RFO challenge charges where errors made by bank.	Existing procedure adequate.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty.	L	Cash handling is not encouraged but where cash received - banked within 7 days.	Existing procedure adequate.
Reserves - General	Adequacy.	L	Consider at Budget setting.	Existing procedure adequate.
Reserves - Earmarked	Adequacy.	L	Consider at Budget and review of final accounts.	Existing procedure adequate.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Reporting and auditing	Information communication.	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly before each Council meeting and approved at the meeting. This statement includes bank reconciliation and budget update.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Compliance.	L	An independent internal auditor has been appointed. Annual reports detailing compliance with audit regulations are presented to Council.	Existing procedure adequate.
Direct costs & overhead expenses	Goods not supplied but billed.	L	Procurement undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance. RFO to follow up on all orders.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations 2023/24.
	Invoice incorrectly calculated or recorded.	L	RFO to check arithmetic on all invoices and perform bank reconciliations on regular basis.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Cheque payable incorrect (excessive or to wrong party).	L	Signatories initial Stub and Voucher to confirm accuracy.	Existing procedure adequate.
Salaries and associated costs.	Salary paid incorrectly.	M	Check salary to Minute, check hours and rate to contract. Salary analysis is detailed on the payment vouchers issued.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Wrong deduction of NI and Tax.	M	NI and Tax deductions are calculated using the HMRC PAYE RTI System which is regularly updated. Check PAYE calculations.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Unpaid Tax and NI contributions to Inland Revenue.	L	Payments are made to HMRC by cheque and detailed in the financial statements presented to Council.	Existing procedure adequate.
Employees.	Loss of clerk.	L	Hours, health, stress, training, long term sick, early departure - risk monitored and managed as appropriate.	Existing procedure adequate. Review annually.
	Fraud by employee.	L	Fidelity Guarantee value reviewed annually and insurance cover arranged.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Actions taken by staff.	L	Relevant training, resources and access to professional advice made available to Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate.
VAT	VAT analysis.	L	All items analysed in cash book. Analysis presented to Council at each meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Claimed within time limits.	L	VAT reclaim submitted annually at year end.	Existing procedure adequate.
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments.	M	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Parish Council Meetings. Relevant procedures set out in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations 2023/24.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Supplier (procurement) fraud	Loss through supplier fraud	L	Training for staff to alert them to potential risks of providing sensitive company information, by telephone or other means, especially contract and account information. All supplier detail changes to be verified using contact details held by Parish Council. Periodic review of supplier accounts to remove any dormant accounts. Periodic review of supplier address and financial health details with Companies House. Review insurance provision.	Review training needs 2023/24. Existing procedure adequate. Existing procedure adequate. Existing procedure adequate. Review 2023/24.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX K

SCHEME OF DELEGATED AUTHORITY

A scheme of delegated authority is adopted to minimise potential threats to business continuity. The scheme of delegated authority would be implemented in response to a risk assessment and consultation with Members.

Terms of the scheme of delegated authority:

(a) That the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer shall have delegated authority to exercise any function that would normally be exercised by the Parish Council excepting any function which statute prescribes may only be exercised by Full Council.

(b) That authority under (a) may only be exercised having received counsel from Members by either email or, where appropriate (including upon request by Members), a duly convened All Member Working Group.

(c) That an All Member Working Group be established comprising all members with a remit to advise the Clerk on issues requiring attention.

(d) That except when discussing matters where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest (as defined in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) working group meetings shall be open to the public to view and, at an appropriate time, participate.

(e) The authority granted under (a) shall have effect until the next Annual Meeting.

(f) All decisions taken under (a) shall be submitted to and ratified by Full Council at the first meeting following exercise of the delegated authority.

(g) The authority under (a) shall not affect any authority which is already delegated through Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, existing policy or previous resolution and any conditions attached thereto shall continue to have effect.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX L

ASSET REVIEW

No.	Item type	Location	Condition			Observations
			Good	OK	Poor	
1	Notice board	Lower Withington Parish Hall (wall mounted)	*			Notice board in good condition, however, going green along the top. **Recommendation:** Consider cleaning of notice board.
2	Notice board	Lower Withington Parish Hall	*			Notice board in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
3	Notice board	Catchpenny Lane	*			Notice board in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
4	Notice board	Dicklow Cob Village Green	*			Notice board in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
5	Defibrillator and cabinet	Lower Withington Parish Hall	*			Defibrillator and cabinet in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
6	Plaque	Lower Withington Parish Hall	*			Plaque in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
7	Speed indicator device	Dicklow Cob Village Green	*			Device in good condition. Minor bends to bottom of surrounding frame but doesn't affect functionality. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
8	Speed indicator device	Salters Lane	*			Device in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
9	Carved owl	Dicklow Cob Village Green	*			Carving in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024. Proceed with planned oiling in summer 2023.
10	Goals posts (2)	Dicklow Cob Village Green	*			Goal posts in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
11	Boundary sign	Forty Acre Lane	*			Sign in good condition. Minor bend to bottom corner. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
12	Boundary sign	Salters Lane (near Pitt Lane)	*			Sign in predominantly good condition. Crack in top corner. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
13	Boundary sign	Salters Lane		*		Sign in good condition, however, supporting post broken off. **Recommendation:** Consider replacing post or installing new boundary feature.
14	Boundary sign	Holmes Chapel Road	*			Sign in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024
15	Boundary sign	Farm Lane	*			Sign in good condition. **Recommendation:** Review 2024

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

ASSET IMAGES



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LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

		
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APPENDIX M

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Handling of Complaints

1.1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk or other nominated proper officer.

1.2 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or proper officer they may be advised to put it to the chairman of the council.

1.3 The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by a committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.

1.4 The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.

1.5 Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

1.6 The council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on the complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.

1.7 The order of the meeting shall be:

a) Chairman introduce everyone.
b) Chairman explain the procedure for the meeting.
c) Complainant (or representative) to outline the grounds for the complaint.
d) Members to ask any questions of the complainant.
e) If relevant, clerk or proper officer to explain council's position.
f) Members to ask questions of the Clerk or proper officer.

g) Clerk or proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order). Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint should be upheld. (if a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back.)
h) Clerk or proper officer and complainant return to hear the decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.

1.8 Decision to be confirmed in writing within seven days together with any details of any action to be taken.

APPENDIX N

Calendar of meetings 2023/24

Monday 15th May, 2023
Monday 26th June, 2023
Monday 31st July, 2023
August – No meeting
Monday 25th September, 2023
Monday 30th October, 2023
Monday 27th November, 2023
December – No meeting
Monday 29th January, 2024
Monday 26th February, 2024
Monday 25th March, 2024
Monday 29th April, 2024
Monday 20th May, 2024

Notes:
All meetings scheduled to start at 7:30p.m. at Lower Withington Parish Hall.
Annual Parish Meeting to take place at 7:30p.m. on the date of the May Parish Council meeting.
All dates subject to venue availability.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX O

Outstanding planning applications & recent planning decisions

18/3395M - Four Oaks, Farm Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DU
Change of use to include use of the site for the holding of auctions (retrospective).
DECISION STATUS - Undecided

19/2936W - Dingle Bank Quarry, Holmes Chapel Road, Lower Withington. SK11 9DR
Variation of Condition 4 on application 16/3064W - Variation of Condition 2, 4 & 5 of permission 10/3080W.
DECISION STATUS - Undecided

22/1031M - Smiths Green Farm, Catchpenny Lane, Lower Withington.
Reserved matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in connection with outline approval 20/0499M.
DECISION STATUS - Undecided

22/3574M - Lower Welltrough Farm, Rigbys Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9EF
Construction of farm building for livestock accommodation for cows and dairy replacements. Application is to replace existing building which will be demolished.
DECISION STATUS - Undecided

22/4550M - Lakeside Cottage, Holmes Chapel Road, Lower Withington. SK11 9AE
Replacement dwelling and garage.
DECISION STATUS - Undecided

23/0516M - Oaklyn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD
Ground and first floor alterations and extensions with a new porch and a utility room extension to re-configure previous extensions.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided [Revised plans submitted 27/03/23]

23/0633M - Land on Pitt Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9ED
Operational development following approval of application 22/2659M (Part 3 Class R of the Town and Country Planning (GDPO) 2015 (as amended)).
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX P

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL - FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS (COMMUTED SUMS)

Cheshire East Council currently holds several Financial contributions in lieu of affordable housing (Commuted sums) and also has a number of legal agreements (Section 106's) in place which will increase funding from developers in the future.

Following the update of the Policy for Allocation of the Financial Contributions (Commuted sums) in lieu of Affordable Housing funding (copy attached), at the Councils Economy and Growth Committee in November 2022, we are writing to all Town and Parish Councils within the borough, to find out whether you are aware of any local projects or development sites that would meet the priorities within the policy and be suitable to receive Commuted sum funding.

We particularly want to bring forward affordable housing in high priority areas, that have not already been met through the affordable housing provision and will prioritise the housing needs of residents highlighted in the Council's Housing Strategy 2018-2023, including the development of:

- The right mix of affordable housing needed by the community.
- Additional temporary accommodation for people who have become homeless.
- Empty properties to bring them back into use.
- Specialist housing, e.g. for families with disabilities or for older people.
- Rural accommodation to enable people to continue to reside within their local communities.

To ensure the creation of mixed tenure affordable housing meets the needs of the whole community and ensures the appropriate use of the Commuted funds funding.

Please contact me if you have any suitable projects or sites that you think would be appropriate for Commuted sum funding to develop additional affordable housing in your local community.

Your assistance would be much appreciated, as it will help ensure that the Commuted sum contributions are allocated fairly, in-line with the council's priorities for affordable housing to help people in areas of affordable housing need.

Please note: The Policy clarifies the process of administering the Commuted sum funding for future affordable housing provision. It is not within the remit of the policy to determine how and when Commuted sums are accepted, as the decision to receive a financial contribution (Commuted sum) is determined through the planning process.