LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Monday 28th April, 2025

Time: 7:30p.m.

Venue: Lower Withington Parish Hall

E.M.Maddock

Dr. E. M. Maddock PSLCC,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. Dated 22nd April, 2025

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 Parish Council Meeting, as shown above, to consider and determine the following business:

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest** - To receive Declarations of Interest in any items on the agenda.
3. **Minutes**
   (a) To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 31st March, 2025 as a correct record and approve signing by the Chairman.
4. **Public Forum for Questions** - To receive questions from members of the public.
5. **Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. L. Smetham**
   (a) To receive a report on items of interest to the Parish Council.
6. **Finance**
   (a) To receive and consider the Financial Statement 2025/26 as at 28th April, 2025. (Appendix A)
   (b) To note receipts since the last meeting listed at Appendix B.
   (c) To approve the payments listed at Appendix C.
   (d) To receive a request for financial support to deliver first aid training within the Parish in June 2025.
   (e) Internal Audit 2024/25
      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.
      2024/25 Report states: "No issues arising – a robust set of accounting records have been maintained with a comprehensive audit trail to supporting information and all internal control objectives have been met."

(f) Final Accounts and Audit Arrangements 2024/25

i. To consider and approve the signing of the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return). (Appendix E)

ii. To approve and adopt the 2024/25 Final Accounts and Supporting Notes. (Appendix F)

iii. To approve the signing of the Accounting Statements 2024/25 (Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return). (Appendix G)

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 H)

(g) To confirm the actions of the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer in submitting a VAT reclaim to HMRC in the sum of £145.96.

7. Planning Applications

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

(b) To consider the following planning applications:

i. None.

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

8. Highway Maintenance and Enhancements

(a) To consider updates on reported highway matters listed at Appendix J.

(b) To receive new highway maintenance matters for attention from Members.

(c) To receive and consider updates relating to proposal to install village gateways at Salters Lane and refresh white lining.

(d) To receive and consider updates relating to speed monitoring options for Trap Street.

9. 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. Cheshire East Council: Lane Rental Scheme Consultation 2025.
[Link to information: https://surveys.cheshireeast.gov.uk/s/Q3FTBS/?m=86873643encup]

ii. Cheshire Association of Local Councils: State of the Local Council Sector Survey 2025.
[Survey objective: To collate information to support the 'Growing Our Communities' strategic partnership which aims to strengthen the role of the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Sector and Town and Parish Councils (Local Councils) in meeting the needs of vulnerable residents, supporting Healthy Households, Healthy Neighbourhoods, and enhancing Health and Care Services across Cheshire East.]

10. Meetings of External Organisations

(a) To receive any updates from the Jodrell Bank Observatory World Heritage Site Steering Group.

11. Parish Matters

(a) To receive a report on matters of interest / concern within the Parish from Gawsworth Ward Policing Team.

(b) To receive and consider updates relating to concerns about motorbike and car racing along A535.

(c) To receive and consider updates relating to the community newsletter.

(d) To receive and consider updates relating to the planting of fruit trees at Dicklow Cob Village Green.

(e) To receive and update relating to the Spring Litter Pick.

(f) To receive and consider update relating to empty properties at Jodrell Bank.

(g) To receive and consider invitation to participate in Lower Withington Parish Hall Open Day.

12. Parish Councillor Vacancy

(a) To consider co-opting an individual (1) to fill current vacancy.

13. Matters for inclusion on next/future meeting agenda

(a) Boundary treatment at Dicklow Cob Village Green.

(b) Consideration of speed review criteria in respect of A535, Salters Lane and Trap Street.

(c) Manchester Airport: Parish Council Forum (07/05/25)

14. Date of next meetings:

(a) Annual Parish Meeting: Monday 19th May, 2025 at 7:30p.m.

(b) Annual Parish Council Meeting: Monday 19th May, 2025 immediately following Annual Parish Meeting.

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.

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

E.M.Maddock

Dr. E. M. Maddock PSLCC,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. Dated 22nd April, 2025

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

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX A

Financial Statement – 2025/26 as at 28th April, 2025					
Actual 2024/25 £	**Details**	**2025/26 Budget £**	**Actual to Apr. 25 £**	**Agenda Apr. 25 £**	**Budget Balance £**
	Receipts				
11,142.00	Precept	11,499.00	0.00	5,749.50	5,749.50
0.00	Balances	3,500.00	0.00		0.00
887.04	Investment interest	0.00	0.00		0.00
0.00	Sale of assets	0.00	0.00		0.00
0.00	Grants, donations & refunds	0.00	0.00		0.00
95.75	VAT refund	0.00	0.00		47.40
12,124.79	**Total receipts**	**14,999.00**	**0.00**	**5,749.50**	**5,796.90**
	Payments				
4,625.40	Salary (Clerk)	4,844.00	0.00	395.63	4,448.37
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00	0.00		0.00
325.00	Allowances (Clerk)	350.00	0.00		350.00
177.27	Administration	300.00	0.00		300.00
0.00	Chairman/Member allowances	0.00	0.00		0.00
220.00	Audit fees (internal & external)	440.00	0.00	232.00	208.00
300.00	Insurance	350.00	0.00		350.00
3,000.00	Grants/Donations (inc. s.137)	2,600.00	0.00		2,600.00
245.00	Website	345.00	0.00	5.00	340.00
221.04	Subscriptions/affiliation fees	285.00	0.00	178.62	106.38
200.00	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
110.95	Assets – purchase	1,000.00	0.00		1,000.00
674.33	Assets – maintenance	2,100.00	0.00		2,100.00
542.39	Newsletter	600.00	0.00		600.00
560.18	Contingency	500.00	0.00		500.00
200.76	VAT		0.00	47.40	
11,402.32	**Total payments**	**14,999.00**	**0.00**	**858.65**	**14,187.75**

Cash/Bank reconciliation	**01/04/24**	**01/04/25**	**28/04/25**	**31/03/26**
Balance B/Fwd	35,238.04	35,238.04	35,238.04	40,128.89
Add total receipts	14,999.00	0.00	5,749.50	5,796.90
Less total payments	14,999.00	0.00	858.65	14,187.75
Balance C/Fwd	35,238.04	35,238.04	40,128.89	31,738.04
Cumulative balances	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**
	01/04/24	**01/04/25**	**28/04/25**	**31/03/26**
General funds	9,814.38	11,814.38	16,705.23	8,314.38
Earmarked reserves	25,423.66	23,423.66	23,423.66	23,423.66
	35,238.04	35,238.04	40,128.89	31,738.04

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Lower Withington Parish Council
Cash/Bank Reconciliation as at 28th April 2025

Cash				
Balance brought forward 01/04/25				
Current Account		2,335.43		
Business Reserve Account		6,583.75		
Liquidity Manager Account		26,318.86		
		35,238.04		
Plus receipts		5,749.50		
Less payments		858.65		
Balance carried forward 28/04/25:		40,128.89		
Bank (NatWest)				
Current Account		9,319.34		04/04/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
Approved 2024/25	-1,234.41			
For approval	-858.65			
		-2,093.06		
			7,226.28	28/04/25
Business Reserve Account		6,583.75		04/04/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			6,583.75	28/04/25
Liquidity Manager Account		26,318.86		04/04/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			26,318.86	28/04/25
Total bank balances 28/04/25			40,128.89	

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX B

Receipts - 2024/25

NatWest Bank plc	£7.40	Gross interest – January, 2025 (BR)
NatWest Bank plc	£6.30	Gross interest – February, 2025 (BR)
NatWest Bank plc	£6.98	Gross interest – March, 2025 (BR)
NatWest Bank plc	£60.66	Gross interest – March, 2025 (LM)

Receipts - 2025/26

Cheshire East Borough Council	£5,749.50	Precept 2025/26 (50%) [A]

APPENDIX C

Payments for approval

Direct Debit	aql ltd.	£6.00	Webmail forwarding [B]
Cheque No 000617	E. M. Maddock	£316.63	Salary: April, 2025 [C]
Cheque No 000618	HM Revenue & Customs	£79.00	PAYE payment [D]
Cheque No 000619	JDH Business Services Ltd.	£278.40	Internal audit fee 2024/25 [E]
Cheque No 000620	Cheshire Association of Local Councils	£178.62	Affiliation fee 2025/26 [F]

[A] Local Government Finance Act 1992 s.41(1)
[B] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [Local Government Act 1972 s.142]
[C] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [Local Government Act 1972 s.112]
[D] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [The Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003 s.67G]
[E] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2025 s.5]
[F] Local Government Act 1972 s.143(1)(a)

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX D

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Lower Withington Parish Council

ENTER PUBLICLY VIEWABLE WEBPAGE ADDRESS: lowerwithington.com

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, 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 2024/25 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 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 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 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 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 2023/24 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 10/04/2025 DD/MM/YYYY

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

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date: 10/04/2025

*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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

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 2025, 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 Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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

www.lowerwithington.com ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX F

Summary Receipts & Payments Account for the year ended 31st March, 2025

2023/24 £.	Receipts	2024/25 £.
10,892.00	Precept	11,142.00
228.09	Investment Interest	887.04
500.00	Grants & Donations	0.00
519.96	V.A.T. Refund	95.75
12,140.05	Total Receipts	12,124.79
	Payments	
4,334.22	Salary (Clerk)	4,625.40
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00
300.00	Allowances (Clerk)	325.00
136.41	Administration	177.27
0.00	Member Allowances	0.00
185.00	Audit Fees (internal & external)	220.00
300.00	Insurance	300.00
2,114.96	Grants / Donations - (inc. Sect. 137)	3,000.00
345.00	Website	245.00
201.50	Subscriptions / Affiliation Fees	221.04
190.00	Room Hire	200.00
0.00	Training	0.00
0.00	Professional Services	0.00
35.98	Assets - Purchase	110.95
9.99	Assets - Maintenance	674.33
771.49	Newsletter	542.39
0.00	Contingency	560.18
95.75	V.A.T.	200.76
9,020.30	Total Payments	11,402.32

31,395.82	Balance B/Fwd. 01/04/24	34,515.57
12,140.05	Add Total Receipts	12,124.79
-9,020.30	Less Total Payments	-11,402.32
34,515.57	Balance C/Fwd. 31/03/25	35,238.04
	Analysis of Cumulative Funds	
6,492.38	NatWest Business Reserve Account	6,583.75
2,500.00	NatWest Bank Current Account	2,335.43
25,523.19	NatWest Liquidity Manager Account	26,318.86
34,515.57	Total	35,238.04
	Above Funds held for the following purposes:-	
8,091.91	General Funds	9,814.38
26,423.66	Earmarked Reserves	25,423.66
0.00	Capital Reserves	0.00
34,515.57		35,238.04

The above Statement represents fairly the financial position of the Lower Withington Parish Council as at 31st March, 2025 and reflects its receipts and payments during the year.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Lower Withington Parish Council – Supporting Notes 2024/25

Assets

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

Christmas tree	40.00
Fruit trees (4)	70.95
	£40.00

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

At the 31st March, 2025 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
Christmas lights	35.98
Christmas tree	40.00
Fruit trees (4)	70.95
	£11,279.17

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

Borrowings

As at close of business on 31st March, 2025 the following loans to the Council were outstanding:- None.

Debts At the year end debts of £200.76 (VAT reclaim) were outstanding and due to the Council.

Capital Reserves None.

Earmarked Reserves

Democratic Services Fund	5,000.00
Transparency Code Grant	118.00
Dicklow Cob Pathway Project Grant	2,205.66
Highway Safety Schemes Fund	5,000.00
Local Organisation Investment Fund	5,000.00
Footpath improvements	600.00
Village Gateway project	7,500.00
	£25,423.66

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 £4,875.31 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.

Contingent Liabilities None.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX G

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*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	31,396	34,516	*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	10,892	11,142	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,248	982	*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	4,334	4,625	*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	4,686	6,777	*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	34,516	35,238	*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	34,516	35,238	*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	11,168	11,279	*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 exclude any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 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 07/04/2025

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 Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX H

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2024/25 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 2025, 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 2025 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2025** notifying the external auditor.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2024/25, 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 2024/25:	£12,125 R AMOUNT £00,000
Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2024/25:	£11,402 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 2021
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2023/24), 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 2025.
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:	
SIGNATURE REQUIRED	DD/MM/YYYY		DD/MM/YYYY
Signed by Chair	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	TELEPHONE NUMBER

*Published web address

www.lowerwithington.com 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 2025. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX I

(a) Recent planning decisions:

23/1613M	Foden Bank Barn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD Conversion of existing gym/office/storage outbuilding to residential annexe. DECISION STATUS – Refused (21/06/24) – Appeal dismissed (14/04/25)
24/2623M	Foden Bank Barn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD Certificate of existing lawful use for internal reconfiguration of existing outbuilding to provide ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling house (C3 Use Class). DECISION STATUS – Negative certificate (09/09/24) – Appeal allowed (14/04/25)
24/4784/VOC	Lapwing Cottage, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD Removal of condition no. 2 of planning permission reference 96/0727P – Dismantling, relocation and reconstruction of cottage complete. DECISION STATUS – Approved with conditions (17/04/25)
25/0833/DSC	Smiths Green Farm, Catchpenny Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DG Discharge of condition 8 on approval 22/1031M: Reserved matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in connection with outline approval 20/0499M. DECISION STATUS – Approved (08/04/25)

(b) Outstanding planning applications

24/3271M	Land at Pitt Lane, Lower Withington. Proposed demolition of a two storey former agricultural building (now in hotel use (C1)) and replace it with a new farmhouse and garage. DECISION STATUS – Undecided
24/4466/HOUS	Bridge Farm, Hodgehill Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9LU Proposed single storey rear and side extension to existing residential property. DECISION STATUS – Undecided
24/4765/CLEUD	3 Welltrough Hall Cottages, Trap Street, Lower Withington. SK11 9EF Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development to confirm the lawful use of no.3 Welltrough Hall Cottages as a dwelling which can be occupied by persons not employed in agriculture. DECISION STATUS – Undecided
25/0378/HOUS	10 South View, Salters Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DZ Proposed single storey extensions to front and rear. DECISION STATUS – Undecided
25/0526/FUL	The Old Pub, Trap Street, Lower Withington. SK11 9EQ Proposed change of use from public house with food provision (sui generis) to restaurant and shop (Class E). DECISION STATUS – Undecided

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25/0627/NMA Brook Farm, Catchpenny Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DG
Non-material amendment to approval 23/2948M for Proposed demolition of a double garage and the construction of a single storey rear extension to accommodate a breakfast and garden room. Insertion of two rooflights to the front roof slope of the house and the construction of an open-sided porch to the east elevation.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

25/0742/HOUS Farmgate Cottage, Farm Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DU
Small extension that will externally rebalance the symmetry of the house across the front of the cottage from extensions completed by previous owners, and create a walk in closet and master bedroom suite along with a more proportionate hall stairs and landing befitting the house.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

25/0812/DSC Piggotts Hall, Congleton Lane, Lower Withington.
Discharge of condition 3 on application 24/2383M.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

APPENDIX J

Updates on reported highway matters

a. Dislodged coping stone and fallen tree on bridge at Catchpenny Lane.
Update: "Unfortunately funds have been really tight this year [2023/24], however this will be prioritised in the new year, for replacement."

b. Holes in road at junction of Whisterfield Lane and Chapel Lane.
Update: "Unfortunately no available resource at the moment, we will only repair actionable defects collected by our routine safety inspectors."

c. Broken sign along A535 (near to The Old Cheshire Hunt).
Update: A job has been raised for the sign to be repaired. (No timescale provided)
Sign removed from site.

d. Proposal for double white lines on A535 near to junction with Catchpenny Lane.
Update: Linked to review of A535.

e. Broken post on Parish boundary sign at Salters Lane.
Update: Order placed for replacement post and remounting of sign.

f. Blocked drains/gullies at Trap Street.
Update: "This is still in the system to be checked by our Drainage Team, we are currently working to get through a large back log of drainage and flooding enquiries due to recent weather events. You should receive the system notification when it has been actioned."

g. Flooding at A535 near junction with Catchpenny Lane
Update: Gullies vary in the speed they can drain water away and some will overflow during heavy rain even if there is no blockage. This does not necessarily mean the gully requires cleaning, and in such cases the water will clear when the rain stops. We will not visit overflowing gullies during heavy rainfall unless the water is causing a risk to life or property.

h. Broken sign along A535 (junction warning sign), north of junction with Catchpenny Lane
Update: This is not a category 1 defect, therefore, will not be repaired immediately. There is currently no budget for non-emergency sign repairs. Sign removed from site.

i. Uprooted street sign (Longshoot Road), at junction of Longshoot Road with A535
Update: This is not a category 1 defect, therefore, will not be repaired immediately. There is currently no budget for non-emergency sign repairs, however, if the damage was the result of a vehicle collision and we could potentially recover the costs and get the signs repaired quicker.

j. Broken sign (Brown sign for Clonter Opera) at junction of Longshoot Road with A535
Update: Repair of this sign is the responsibility of the business, however, if the damage was the result of a vehicle collision and we can recover the costs, we will re-erect the sign.

k. Provision of grit bin at Longshoot Road
Update: Information relating to grit bins is available on Cheshire East Council website.

l. Advertising signs on fence along A535 (opposite junction with Longshoot Road
Update: This report has been closed as signs are on a private fence and are the property owners responsibility.

m. Surplus temporary signage warning of mud at Catchpenny Lane
Update: No update.

n. Broken sign (chevron) at Salters Lane near to Mill House Farm.
Update: Work complete (16/04/25)