



How to contact us

Write to: Manor House, Church Street,
Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5EW

Email: lrc@littlehampton-tc.gov.uk

Call: 01903 732063

Find us online: www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

16 June 2023

Notice is hereby given that there will be an ordinary meeting of the Town Council

**Venue: The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street,
Littlehampton BN17 5EW**

Date: Thursday 22 June 2023

Time: 6.30 pm

Laura Chrysostomou, Town Clerk

Agenda 2023 to 2024

- 1. Evacuation Procedures**
- 2. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones**

During this meeting, the public are allowed to film the Committee and officers only from the front of the public gallery, providing it does not disrupt the meeting. Any items in the Exempt Part of an agenda cannot be filmed. If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person or persons filming must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

- 3. Apologies**
- 4. Declarations of interest**

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declaration of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

You should declare your interest by stating:

- a. the item you have the interest in
- b. whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, whereupon you will be taking no part in the discussions on that matter, or
- c.
 - i. whether it is a personal interest and the nature of the interest
 - ii. whether it is also a prejudicial interest
 - iii. If it is a prejudicial interest, whether you will be exercising your right to speak under Public Forum.

It is recorded in the register of interests that:

- Councillors Blanchard-Cooper, Butcher, Long, May, O'Neill, Tandy, Wiltshire, Woodman and Worne, are Members of Arun District Council.
- Councillor Northeast is a Member of Arun District Council and Chairman of the Keystone Centre Management Committee.
- Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ is a Member of Arun District Council, West Sussex County Council, and the Littlehampton Harbour Board.

These interests only need to be declared at the meeting if there is an agenda item to which they relate.

5. Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2023, circulated herewith, pages 4 to 10. In accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders, Section 9a, Members are reminded that no discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy.

6. Town Mayor Report and Urgent Items

7. Public Forum

Members of the public are invited to ask questions or raise issues which are relevant and are the concern of this committee. A period of 15 minutes is allocated for this purpose. If possible, notice of intention to address the Committee should be given to the Clerk by noon of the day of the meeting.

8. Correspondence or Issues in Respect of the District or County Council

9. Reports from Committees – Non-Exempt

9.1. Recommendations from Committees - There are none.

9.2. Committee Minutes – Non-Exempt

9.2.1. Planning and Transportation

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2023 circulated herewith, pages 11 to 15, at which the following items were discussed:

Minutes:

- 6.1. Coastal Erosion – The West Bank
- 6.2. Rampion 2 Windfarm

- 6.3. New Stagecoach Bus Route 500
- 6.4. Planning Application LU/299/22/PL – Land North of Littlehampton Academy
- 6.5. Road Markings – Fitzalan Link Road Roundabout and Highdown Drive
- 8.2. Planning Applications, Lists 17, 18, 19 and 20.
- 8.3. Planning Application LU/92/23/PL, 46a & 47 Pier Road, and land North of Clifton Road Littlehampton

9.2.2. Community Resources

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2023, circulated herewith, pages 16 to 22, at which the following items were discussed:

Minutes:

- 8.1. Working Groups Memberships
- 8.2. Christmas Lights Working Group Notes
- 8.3. Sports Forum Notes
- 9.1. Youth Services Contract
- 9.2. Christmas Lights Contract
- 9.3. Events Periodic Report
- 9.4. Museum Periodic Report
- 9.5. Grant Aid Applications 2023
- 10.1. Committee Budget Monitor

9.2.3. Policy and Finance

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023, circulated herewith, pages 23 to 29, at which the following items were discussed:

Minutes:

- 8.1. Town Centre Action Group
- 8.2. Public Realm Update
- 8.3. Pier Road Closure
- 9.1. Committee Budget Monitor
- 10. Town Centre Update
- 12. Town Centre Events Programme

10. Officer's Reports

10.1 Audit and Annual Return 2022 to 2023

- 10.1.1. **Annual Governance Statement 2022 to 2023 - Section 1 of the Annual Return**, report attached pages 30 to 51.
- 10.1.2. **Statement of Accounts 2022 to 2023 - Section 2 of the annual return**, report attached pages 52 to 59.

11. Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies

12. Exempt Business

It is **Recommended** that:

The public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded from the Meeting under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

Minutes of the Annual meeting of The Town Council held in The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Thursday 18 May 2023 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Tandy – Chair
Councillor Blanchard-Cooper
Councillor Butcher
Councillor Daws
Councillor Lee
Councillor Long
Councillor Northeast
Councillor Tilbrook
Councillor Walsh
Councillor Wiltshire
Councillor Worne

2023 to 2024

1. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

3. Installation of Town Mayor

The Deputy Mayor and Mayor Elect Councillor Tandy was installed as the Town Mayor. The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Long congratulated the Mayor on his appointment and handing over the Chain of Office and wished him well.

4. Declaration of Office and Welcome Address

4.1. Councillor Tandy read and duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office as Town Mayor.

The Town Clerk as the Proper Officer of the Council confirmed that the declaration had been made and congratulated the new Town Mayor.

- 4.2.** The Mayor addressed the meeting and stated that he felt incredibly humbled and honoured to be taking on the responsibilities of Town Mayor and that it was a role he would fulfil with both humility and determination. He thanked the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Long, for her wonderful tutorage over the past year and remarked on how immensely grateful he was for her support and encouragement.

He then welcomed all members of the council, new and returning, and stated that he looked forward to working with them all in the same spirit of cooperation that had characterised previous administrations and to the same high standard he had seen over the past four years.

He reminisced over the councillors who had not returned this year and hoped that they remembered their time at the council fondly and were proud of what they were able to contribute to the town.

The Mayor announced that he would be using his term to raise money for Men's mental health charities. He highlighted the importance of awareness around Men's mental health, especially since the global pandemic, and hoped that he could help the countless men that have suffered in silence.

To close the speech, he made a commitment to serve the town in whatever way he could.

5. Appointment of Deputy Mayor

- 5.1.** Councillor Butcher nominated Councillor Lee as a candidate for Deputy Mayor and this nomination was seconded by Councillor Daws.

In nominating Councillor Lee, Councillor Butcher stated that he was dedicated to serving the town and that he was committed to creating a safe and vibrant community for all to enjoy. There being no further nominations Council proceeded to a vote.

It was unanimously resolved that:

Councillor Lee be elected Deputy Mayor for 2023 to 2024, Vice Chair of the Council and Town Mayor Elect.

- 5.2.** Accepting his appointment, Councillor Lee stated how humbled he was by the nomination and that he was honoured to be taking on the role of Deputy Mayor. He stated that he had been living in Littlehampton for the past five years and reflecting on his background he stated that he was a round the world sailor and a keen water sports enthusiast; and that as a committed Trade Unionist employed in the education sector for the last 25 years, he shared the values of the Council. Looking forward to serving the community

he added that he was committed to making the town diverse, inclusive, and vibrant.

6. Vote of thanks to outgoing Mayor

- 6.1.** On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group on the Town Council, Councillor Blanchard-Cooper lead the tributes to the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Long. Expressing his thanks to Councillor Long for her work on behalf of the town, he added that she had been very generous with her time and had represented the town with grace and charm. Commenting on her willingness to meet and support local community groups and recalling the spectacular highs and lows of her year, he offered his heartfelt thanks on behalf of the community. In conclusion, he stated that he very much looked forward to working with fellow councillors in the new administration.
- 6.2.** Councillor Butcher echoed these comments and commended Councillor Long for her tremendous sense of fun during what had been an eventful year. Highlighting Councillor Long's support of the events organised by the Wick Action Group, he felt that she had highlighted the wonderful opportunity that being Mayor presented to learn about the local community groups and residents.
- 6.3.** Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ also applauded Councillor Long's enthusiasm, flair, and the great sense of fun that she had brought to the role. He added that these qualities had undoubtedly enhanced the reputation of the town at home and abroad.
- 6.4.** In response Councillor Long thanked members for their very kind words. She also expressed her gratitude to the town for inviting her to the many events she had attended during her mayoral year and for the opportunity it had afforded her to find out more about the community. She had represented the town as it mourned the late queen and celebrated the accession of King Charles the third. Her second term had showed her once again what a wonderful town Littlehampton was, and she wished her successor a wonderful year. In recognition of her year and on behalf of the Council, the Mayor presented Councillor Long with a bouquet.

7. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillors May, O'Neill and Woodman who were away, and Councillor Richards who was unwell.

8. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted.

It was stated on the Agenda that Councillor Tilbrook was a member of Arun District Council. This was an error and would be rectified going forward.

9. Public Forum

There were eight members of the public present.

- 9.1.** The Town Clerk read out a representation on behalf of a resident who congratulated the new Councillors on their election and wished them good luck in their roles. The resident also asked the council to bear in mind the latest scientific information regarding the impact of increasing rainfall in the United Kingdom, as Littlehampton was in a flood plain. The Mayor thanked the resident for her good wishes and confirmed that her representation had been noted.
- 9.2.** Council then heard from a representative of the Littlehampton Guild of Co-operators for Peace and the Common Good. Speaking of the importance of the town council level of government, he expressed the hope that the Council would investigate the livestreaming of meetings in future. He asked the Council to consider forming a link with the Mayors for Peace organisation. He also asked that Littlehampton should be known as a community of and for peace and co-operation and the common good. On behalf of the Council the Town Clerk thanked the representative for his comments and stated that these requests would be noted for consideration by the Council as it looked to develop its priorities for the next four years.

10. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2023, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

11. Mayors Report and Urgent Items

There were none.

12. Appointment of Committees, Representatives on Outside Bodies and Authorised Signatories

- 12.1.** The Town Clerk presented a report, previously circulated which set out the rationale for the allocation of Committee places and vacancies for outside bodies. She explained that the Group Leaders had been approached for their nominations for 2023 to 2024 and invited Council to review these proposals.

- 12.2.** Council proceeded to discuss the Committee and Sub-Committee nominations. Regarding the Property and Personnel Committee, there was one vacancy. Councillor Tilbrook expressed his willingness to fill this role and there being no further nominations, this was supported by Council.
- 12.3.** Regarding the proposals for membership of Outside Bodies, there were three groups for whom multiple nominations to fill roles had been proposed where only one representative was required. It was noted that where it was acceptable to the Outside Body, Council supported the appointment of two representatives. Should this be declined, the following were agreed as the primary and secondary nominations of the Council, with the secondary deputising if permitted by the Outside Body:
- Littlehampton Sportsfield Management Committee – Councillor Lee, primary nomination and Councillor Tilbrook, secondary nomination.
 - Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice - Councillor Woodman, primary nomination and Councillor Wiltshire, secondary nomination.
 - Rampion 2 Community Liaison Group - Councillor Wiltshire, primary nomination and Councillor Woodman, secondary nomination.
- 12.4.** Regarding the Progress Editorial Board there was one vacancy, and it was proposed that Councillor O'Neill fill the position. This was duly seconded and supported by Council.
- 12.5.** Turning to the Town Council's representation on the North Littlehampton Steering Group, it was reported that Councillor May would be appointed to the Steering Group by Arun District Council. This would leave a vacancy and it was proposed that Councillor Butcher fill the position. This was duly seconded and supported by Council.
- 12.6.** Finally, observing that the Mayor was also chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee, it was considered prudent that Councillor Blanchard-Cooper as Vice Chair of the Community Resources Committee remain an authorised Member signatory.

It was therefore resolved:

1. That subject to the change set out in point 12.2. above, the Committee and Sub-Committee memberships including the Chairs and Vice-Chairs as set out in appendix 1 be approved.
2. That subject to the changes set out in Point 12.3 and 12.5 above, the representatives to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.
3. That subject to the change set out in point 12.4. above, the membership of the Progress Editorial Board be approved.

4. That the Mayor, the Chairs of the Policy and Finance, Community Resources, Planning and Transportation and Property and Personnel Committees and the Vice Chair of the Community Resources Committee be confirmed as authorised Member signatories and that the Town Council's bank mandate be amended accordingly.

13. Correspondence or Issues in Respect of the District or County Council

Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ redeclared a personal interest in the following matter as a member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board.

13.1. Coastal Erosion – The West Bank

Council had before it a copy of the letter that had been sent to the local member of parliament on the above matter. Observing that considerable work had been undertaken to repair the groynes on the West Beach, it was considered prudent that the matter be referred to the Planning and Transportation Committee for monitoring.

It was therefore resolved that:

This item be added to the Planning and Transportation Committee Agenda going forward.

14. Property and Personnel Committee

14.1. It was resolved that:

The Property and Personnel Committee scheduled for 5 June 2023 be cancelled.

15. Reports from Committees – Non-Exempt

15.1. Recommendations from Committees

There were none.

15.2 Committee Minutes – Non-Exempt

15.2.1 Planning and Transportation

Council received and noted the Minutes of the meetings held on 27 March and 24 April 2023, previously circulated. Regarding minute 120.2.2., the A259 Bognor Regis to Littlehampton proposals, it was considered important that the necessity to create a continuous cycleway link along this route and through into the town centre be highlighted.

It was therefore resolved that:

Council's comments as set out Minute 15.2.1. above be forwarded to the County Council.

16. Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies

- 16.1.** On behalf of the Bonfire Society, Councillor Blanchard-Cooper was pleased to report that plans were well underway for this year's annual bonfire event. The Bonfire Committee had recently met and wished to express their gratitude to the Town Council for their continued support. The Committee was also keen to encourage volunteers and those who wished to participate in the event itself to come forward. The recent May Fair and Plant Sale fund raiser had also gone well, and the Committee looked forward to delivering the annual parade, bonfire, and fireworks on Saturday 28 October 2023.

17. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7:15 pm.

Mayor

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held in The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Monday 22 May 2023 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Tandy – Chair
Councillor Daws
Councillor Long
Councillor Richards
Councillor Wiltshire
Councillor Woodman

2023 to 2024

1. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

3. Apologies

There were none.

4. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda.

Councillors Tandy, Long, Wiltshire and Woodman declared personal interests in agenda item 8, Planning and other District Council matters as members of Arun District Council.

5. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2023, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

6.1. Coastal Erosion – The West Bank

At the Annual Council meeting on 18 May 2023, it was agreed that further correspondence on this matter be monitored by this Committee. Officers would therefore continue to chase for a reply and the Committee would be kept informed of responses.

It was Resolved that:

The update be noted.

6.2. Rampion 2 Windfarm

A meeting of the Rampion 2 Project Team Liaison Group had been called and was scheduled to take place on 14 June 2023. Councillor Wiltshire would be attending as the Council's primary representative and would report back to the Committee.

It was Resolved that:

The update be noted.

6.3. New Stagecoach Bus Route 500

As part of the West Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plan, the County Council would be implementing a new bus service, the Stagecoach - Route 500, in the summer. The service would run between Chichester and Littlehampton via Tangmere, Barnham and Yapton and work would be starting shortly to update the bus stops along the route. Members welcomed this additional bus service, and it was agreed that details be sent to Members of the Committee.

It was Resolved that:

The update be noted.

6.4. Planning Application LU/299/22/PL – Land North of Littlehampton Academy

The applicant had contacted the Town Council to advise that following further work, revised plans had been submitted to the local planning authority. They had also offered to present these plans to the Committee.

It was Resolved that:

The update be noted, and the applicant be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

6.5. Road Markings - Fitzalan Link Road Roundabout and Highdown Drive

Concern was expressed regarding the lack of road markings at the newly installed junction at the north of Highdown Drive leading into the new Nightingale Lane / Fitzalan Road roundabout. Signage was also poor, and these factors combined made the junction, which was still comparatively new, dangerous particularly if road users were not used to the new set up.

It was Resolved that:

The matter be reported to West Sussex Highways for urgent attention.

7. Public Forum

There were two members of the public present. The Committee heard from a representative of the 20s Plenty Campaign in Littlehampton.

- 7.1.** Members had before them details of proposals for the introduction of a 20 mile per hour speed limit in Littlehampton, copy attached to the Minutes. Congratulating Members on their recent election success the representative highlighted the many benefits that the introduction of the reduced speed limit could bring to the area. Emphasizing the advantages for all sections of society and the environment, he also spoke of the outcomes of several surveys which in his view supported the case for this and how it would bring the area one more step closer to becoming less reliant on cars. He therefore asked the Committee to consider supporting this proposal.
- 7.2.** In response the Chairman thanked the representative for addressing the Committee and for the detailed information he had provided. Observing the Council would undertake a detailed exercise to establish its priorities for the next four years, he proposed that Members be given the opportunity to review the information they had received and discuss a way forward at the next meeting. This was supported.

It was therefore Resolved that:

This item be placed on the Agenda for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

8. Planning and other Arun District Council Matters

8.1. Standing Orders / Urgent Actions

The Committee received and noted the Urgent Action, previously circulated, regarding the proposals for street naming in Phase 5 of the development in North Littlehampton.

8.2. Planning Applications, Lists 17, 18, 19 and 20.

It was Resolved that:

The representations of the Council, appended to these Minutes as Appendix 1, be forwarded to Arun District Council.

8.3. Planning Application LU/92/23/PL, 46a & 47 Pier Road, and land North of Clifton Road Littlehampton

- 8.3.1.** The Committee considered the application which proposed variations to plans previously approved under planning application LU/287/17/PL. The revised plans would see a decrease in the size of some of the units in the development, and the loss of some balconies. It was noted that the number of flats and parking provision was unchanged.

Councillor Woodman left the meeting at 7.13 pm.

- 8.3.2.** Members proceeded to discuss the proposals in more detail and observed that the size of the accommodation in the one-bedroom units whilst small, was within the Space Standards. A representation from a resident had also requested that obscured glazing where the development overlooked neighbouring properties and which was proposed in the original plans, had been removed from the revised plans, Members agreed that it should be reinstated to provide privacy. It was also noted that reservations had been expressed by the planning officer regarding the impact of the loss of the balcony areas. Members supported this view and were minded to object to the application because it represented a loss of amenity space. The Committee did however consider that if the points relating to the glazing and balconies could be satisfactorily addressed it would be willing to reconsider its stance.

The Committee therefore Resolved to:

Object to the planning application and that the Committee's views as set out in Minute 8.3.2. above be forwarded to Arun District Council.

9. Transportation and other West Sussex County Council Matters

There were none.

10. Masterplan, North Littlehampton

There was nothing further to report.

11. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7.17 pm.

CHAIR

Appendix 1

LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL Planning and Transportation Committee 22 May 2023 Representation on Lists 17,18, 19 and 20

Plan List No.	Ward	Ward Councillor	Planning No.	Details of Application	Location	Comments
17	River		LU/105/23/PL	1 No. replacement window on the first floor of the Northern elevation. This application is in CIL Zone 4 (zero rated) as other development.	Flat 9, The Regent Building Terminus Road Littlehampton BN17 5BE	No Objection
18	Wickbourne		LU/107/23/CLP	Lawful development certificate for a proposed new porch attached to the front elevation of the house. Access to the site is unchanged and no demolitions are proposed.	1 Fort Road Littlehampton	No Objection

Minutes of a Meeting of the Community Resources Committee held in The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Thursday 8 June 2023 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Lee – Chair
Councillor Blanchard-Cooper
Councillor Daws
Councillor Tilbrook
Councillor May
Councillor O'Neill
Councillor Wiltshire

2023 to 2024

1. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

3. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Long who had another commitment. Councillor Tilbrook attended in her place.

4. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted.

Councillor Blanchard-Cooper declared a personal interest in Item 9.5 as a member of the Friends of Mewsbrook Park and a volunteer with Turning Tides Homelessness.

Councillor O'Neill declared a personal interest in Item 9.5, as his daughter was a member of the Littlehampton Town Football Club.

5. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2023, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

There were none.

7. Public Forum

There were three members of the public present and there were no representations.

8. Working Groups - Memberships and Notes

- 8.1.** The Committee was asked to appoint the membership of the Working Groups that currently reported to this Committee for 2023 to 2024. Regarding the Allotments Working Group it was proposed that Councillors Tilbrook and Worne be appointed as members of the Working Group and that Councillor O'Neill be appointed Chair of the Working Group and Councillor Wiltshire, Vice Chair. Regarding the Christmas Lights Working Group it was proposed that Councillors Lee, Butcher, and Daws be appointed as members of the Working Group and that Councillor Blanchard-Cooper be re-appointed Chair of the Working Group. There were no further nominations.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. Councillor O'Neill be appointed Chair of the Allotments Working Group, Councillor Wiltshire, Vice Chair, and that Councillors Tilbrook and Worne be appointed to the Working Group for 2023 to 2024.
2. Councillor Blanchard-Cooper be appointed Chair of the Christmas Lights Working Group and that Councillors Lee, Butcher and Daws be appointed to the Christmas Lights Working Group for 2023 to 2024.

8.2. Christmas Lights Working Group Notes

The Committee received the notes of the meeting, previously circulated, held on 14 March 2023, with no matters arising.

It was Resolved that:

The notes of the Christmas Lights Working Group meeting held on 14 March 2023 be noted.

8.3. Sports Forum Notes

The Committee received the notes of the meeting, previously circulated, held on 3 April 2023, with no matters arising.

It was Resolved that:

The notes of the Sports Forum meeting held on 3 April 2023 be noted.

9. Officers Reports

9.1. Youth Services Contract

- 9.1.1.** The Assistant Town Clerk introduced a report, previously circulated, which recommended that the Town Council's contract for youth work provision in Littlehampton remain with Arun Church operating as Arun Youth Projects for a further three years. She explained the tender process and it was noted that the contract had been advertised through a Public Notice, the Town Council's social media and the Government's Contracts Finder Service.
- 9.1.2.** The Chair welcomed Mr Jolly, Executive Leader at Arun Church, to the meeting and invited him to address the Committee. Mr Jolly began with a brief outline of the history and services delivered by Arun Youth Projects (AYP). He explained that The Church had been operating in the community for a number of years and that since 2017, AYP had been working in partnership with both Littlehampton Town Council and Rustington Parish Council and built the successful working relationship that had enabled AYP to grow. It was noted that the Service was not faith based and open to all young people.
- 9.1.3.** In response to questions from the Committee Mr Jolly explained that AYP delivered a range of targeted and universal services offering constructive activities, information, and support to local young people. This included outreach work which complimented the youth sessions and enabled youth workers to engage with young people outside of the traditional youth club environment. It was noted that the outreach service was targeted in areas which were identified from intelligence gathered by the Arun Community Safety Partnership.
- 9.1.4.** The Service was staffed by a team of youth group leaders and volunteers including young people who participated in the Service's Young Leader Programme. The Youth Leaders were trained to identify when young people might be struggling and were experienced in both supporting and sign posting young people to other agencies for more specific help if required. Mr Jolly explained in more detail how AYP worked with members of the Arun Community Safety Partnership locally to tackle specific issues. These were often centred on tackling antisocial behaviour and also involved the Service working closely with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Community Wardens.
- 9.1.5.** Mr Jolly confirmed that the Service would be excited to work with the Town Council to explore options to expand the Service using the new community centre in Hampton Park. He added that the Service would be pleased to host

Councillors and it was agreed that the Team would liaise with the Community Resources Officer to take this forward. The Chair thanked Mr Jolly for his presentation.

It was therefore Resolved that:

The contract for youth work provision in Littlehampton be awarded to Arun Youth Projects for a further three years with a budget of £55,000 per annum, giving a total contract value of £165,000.

9.2. Christmas Lights Contract

- 9.2.1.** The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which set out the specification and tender process regarding the Town Council's contract for the delivery of the Christmas lighting scheme in Littlehampton. This was a three-year contract, and the Committee was recommended to approve quote one which having been assessed against the bid criteria offered the best value for money.
- 9.2.2.** Members proceeded to consider the quotations in more detail. It was noted that the inclusion of a large lit bauble as a focal point for the illuminations aimed to deliver a unique feature to the display and the positioning of the desired illuminated welcome signage, if it went ahead, would need to be agreed. Regarding the bauble, Members felt that should this aspect of the scheme proceed, further work would be required to ensure that the object was both secure and protected against vandalism. Observing that the illuminated welcome signage was a desirable requirement, the advice of the contractor would be important in determining the practicalities of the installation.
- 9.2.3.** In terms of visualising the final scheme it was noted that the recommended contractor had demonstrated ability to make changes and expressed a willingness to work with the Town Council in finalising the details of the scheme. It was important that an appointment was made promptly to ensure that the necessary licenses and permissions required for the display were in place. In selecting quote one, it was therefore noted that the detailed aspects of the bid highlighted by Members above would be taken forward by the Working Group when it met with the supplier following the award of the contract.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. Quote one be approved as the Town Council's contractor to provide Christmas lighting for a three-year period at a sum not exceeding £20,000 per year giving a total contract value of £60,000.
2. The Christmas Lights Working Group meet with the contractor promptly to address the points raised by the Committee and finalise the lighting scheme.

9.3. Events Periodic Report

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which provided an update on the outcome of the Easter Out and About sessions and progress on the preparations for the rest of the events set out in the 2023 to 2024 events programme. Remarking on the ever-growing popularity of the Easter Out and About session at Mewsbrook Park, Councillor Blanchard-Cooper placed on record his thanks to the Events Team for organising such a successful event. This was noted and would be shared with the Team.

It was Resolved that:

1. The outcome of the Easter Out and About sessions be noted.
2. The progress on the preparations for the remaining events in the 2023 to 2024 events programme be noted.
3. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

9.4. Museum Periodic Report

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which contained an update on Museum activities, engagement, and proposals for acquisitions.

It was Resolved that:

1. The acquisition of the items detailed in Appendix A be approved.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

9.5. Grant Aid Applications 2023

9.5.1. The Committee received a report and recommendations for the award of 2023 Grant Aid, previously circulated. The report also set out feedback from groups who had benefitted from grants awarded the previous year. The annual Grant Aid budget for 2023 to 2024 was £15,000 and the amount requested totalled £39,000. It had therefore been necessary to scale back many of the applications to ensure as many initiatives as possible could benefit from the scheme. Assessing the applications had been a difficult task and Members thanked the Community Resources Officer for his work on this. Additionally, the Committee was asked to agree a further one-year extension of the terms of the 2022 grants given to The Littlehampton Society and The Juno Project.

9.5.2. The Committee proceeded to review the applications in more detail. The Community Resources Officer provided clarification regarding several bids, and it was evident that the recommended allocations would enable most applicants to deliver some elements of their planned projects. Members considered that all the applications were deserving of support and in reviewing them the following points were noted:

Littlehampton Croquet Club – Agreeing that this was an essential piece of equipment the Committee wished to highlight the importance of the defibrillator being accessible to as many people as possible.

Littlehampton Town Football Club – In awarding the funding the Committee wished to ensure that the Town Council's logo was included on the kit that would be being funded.

Armed Forces Family Peer Support UK - In awarding the funding the Committee wished to ensure that provision was made for the laptop to be passed on to another suitable group should this newly formed organisation be unable to continue or returned to the Town Council.

9.5.3. It was also agreed that the unallocated balance of £105 from this year's scheme be awarded to 4sight Vision Support. Reflecting on the process, the Committee considered that a review of the Town Council's Grant Aid Criteria was needed and that this should be included within the overall review of strategic aims and priorities that would be undertaken by the new Council. Members also wished to visit all the organisations in receipt of a grant, and it was agreed that the Community Resources Officer would work with the Chair and Mayor to facilitate this.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. The recommendations regarding the award of the 2023 Grant Aid be approved and the clarifications highlighted in Minute 9.5.2. above be taken forward with the relevant groups.
2. The unallocated balance of the 2023 Grant Aid Budget £105 be awarded to 4sight Vision Support.
3. The successful projects undertaken from the previous year due to the Town Council Grants scheme be noted.
4. A further one-year extension of the terms of the 2022 grants given to The Littlehampton Society and The Juno Project be approved.

10. Finance

10.1. Committee Budget Monitor

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which highlighted significant variances from budget in income and expenditure related to the Community Resources Committee budget for 2022 to 2023.

It was therefore Resolved that:

The report be noted.

11. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 8:10pm.

CHAIR

UNAPPROVED

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held in The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Monday 12 June 2023 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Butcher – Chair
Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ
Councillor Lee
Councillor O'Neill
Councillor Northeast
Councillor Tandy
Councillor Woodman

2023 to 2024

1. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

3. Apologies

There were none.

4. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted, and no further declarations were made at this point.

5. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2023, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

- 6.1.** The Town Clerk reported that there had been further developments in respect of Agenda Item 8.2, Town Centre Update, and the proposed Christmas market. This would in all likelihood require the committee to move into exempt business. It was therefore considered expedient to change the order of business.

It was Resolved that:

The Town Centre Update be moved to the end of the agenda.

7. Public Forum

There were three members of the public present and no representations made.

8. Officer's Reports

8.1. Town Centre Action Group

The committee was asked to appoint one other member to the Town Centre Action Group. It was proposed that Councillor Northeast take up this role and there being no other nominations.

it was Resolved that:

Councillor Northeast be appointed to the Town Centre Action Group.

8.2. Public Realm Update

- 8.2.1.** The Committee had before it and previously circulated, a report that had been prepared for Arun District Council's Economy Committee which contained an update following the completion of the Town Centre phases 2 and 3 of the Public Realm Improvement works. This would be presented to their committee on 13 June 2023.

- 8.2.2.** Now that the first phases were complete, the committee felt it was important to complete the extension through Surrey Street to the Harbour Lights Cafe linking to Pier Road and New Road. This would see these areas integrated into the scheme and importantly create a vital link between the Town Centre and the River and Seafront visitor destinations. Members were therefore pleased to see that the District Council proposed securing additional grant funding to facilitate the completion of phases four and five.

- 8.2.2.** Observing the unspent budget, it was suggested that the District Council be approached to explore the potential of funding the external refurbishment of the Town Centre Clock Tower, the estimated costs of which were thought to be in the region of five to six thousand pounds. In addition, the committee

urgently wished to see in place a full High Street maintenance programme to include sealing and cleaning of the paving, litter bins and seating.

- 8.2.3. Members also sought confirmation of the timeframe for the removal of the plastic barriers that currently surrounded the new horticultural beds outside Peacocks and the Dolphin Public House. It was agreed that these points be raised with the Public Realm Project Board and noted for review by the Town Centre Action Group.

It was therefore Resolved that:

The external refurbishment of the Town Centre Clock Tower and the High Street maintenance programme be raised with the Public Realm Project Board and monitored by the Town Centre Action Group.

8.3. Pier Road Closure

Councillor O'Neill declared a personal interest in the following discussion as he owned a property in Bayford Road, a possible diversion route should Pier Road be closed to traffic.

- 8.3.1. The committee had before it and previously circulated, a report that had been prepared for Arun District Council's Economy Committee setting out options for the potential future closure of Pier Road. The District Council was leading on the proposed closure and their Officers, with input from the County Council as the Local Highways Authority and responsibility for implementing the necessary traffic regulations, had researched options and the process. It was noted that the final decision on any road closure rested with the County Council who prioritised these requests through their Local Transport Improvement Projects and that the suitability of the scheme would be assessed by a panel that met in July.
- 8.3.2. The committee proceeded to review the options and a discussion ensued regarding the scope and implications of the schemes. Observing the growth of residential development displacing businesses in the southern section of Pier Road, the ability of the proposals to deliver the vibrant leisure atmosphere that was envisaged were debated. Members also recalled the problems experienced with the temporary closures introduced during the pandemic with inadequate signage and local traffic jams in the surrounding residential roads especially Bayford Road. The support of all traders was also considered vital to the success of any scheme.
- 8.3.3. The Town Council supported the pedestrianisation of Pier Road and Members emphasised the need to ensure that any future plans were thoroughly researched and properly considered the route of any diversion that might be required to facilitate the closure of Pier Road. It was therefore considered important that the plans had the support of the traders and included prominent

and attractive local signage that reflected the quality of investment already made in the river walkway.

- 8.3.4. On balance the committee favoured a seasonal closure but supported the District Council's efforts to secure the inclusion of closing Pier Road to through-traffic as a County Council Local Transport Improvement Project. Noting that the District Council's Economy Committee would be reviewing the options at their meeting the following day it was considered important that Members views be shared with them as soon as possible.

It was therefore Resolved that:

Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to agree a final representation and urgently relay the Committee's views to the District Council.

9. Finance

9.1. Committee Budget Monitor

- 9.1.1. Members received a report, previously circulated, highlighting significant variances from budget in Income and Expenditure relating to the Policy and Finance Committee. The report set out the Committee budget year end position for 2022 to 2023, movements in the Committee's Earmarked Reserves and an update on debt recovery.
- 9.1.2. The Town Clerk explained the process for creating and monitoring earmarked reserves. It was noted that it was good practice to review earmarked reserves twice a year to ensure they remained relevant and reflected the Town Council's priorities. These would therefore be reviewed as part of the work of the new Council when it came to setting its objectives for the coming four years and a recommendation as to whether they should be retained, repurposed, or returned to general reserves made. It was agreed that clarification regarding the level and definition of Capital Receipts and Capital Receipts Reserves (item 3.6.6 of the report) would be sent to Members. It was also noted that some reserves were subject to certain conditions and could be held for some time particularly if they related to grants awarded to the Town Council by external bodies for specific projects.

It was Resolved that:

Clarification regarding the level and definition of the Capital Receipts Reserves be circulated to Members and that the report be noted.

10. Town Centre Update

- 10.1. The Town Clerk introduced a report, previously circulated, which set out the outcome of the Traders Coronation Window Competition and progress with

delivering the Town Centre Strategy and Events Programme. Discussion focussed on the Town Centre Strategy and the Town Clerk explained that the Strategy had been adopted by the Council in October 2022 setting out strategic objectives for the Town Centre.

- 10.2. Members complimented the Team on the way in which the Strategy had been presented and were pleased to see that engagement with landlords had been prioritised.
- 10.3. One of the initial actions of the Town Centre Action Group (TCAG), would be to review the Town Centre Strategy and agree an action plan setting short-, medium- and long-term objectives for the Town Centre.
- 10.4. Having succeeded in securing funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through the District Council, the first steps would see the appointment of a consultant. Key areas for development included supporting business representation and freeholder engagement as well as supporting the TCAG to take forward the Strategy and Action Plan. This highlighted the need for the consultant to have expertise in this field and it was noted that the District Council was supporting the Town Council with this appointment.
- 10.5. Commenting upon the general trend towards leisure that could be seen in High Streets, it was suggested that the Town Council might want to review its long-term objectives. It was however felt that this would be tested by the Christmas market proposals if they went ahead and that the TCAG would take a view on in the longer term.
- 10.6. The Town Clerk confirmed that a recent meeting with District Council Officers had been productive and that confirmation on the level of support for Town Centre events was expected shortly.
- 10.7 The committee was supportive of the proposals which it considered would enable this work to be undertaken and lead to the development of the TCAG into an effective body, in line with the Town Centre Strategy.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. The outcome of the window competition for traders aligned to the Kings Coronation as set out in paragraphs 3.1. to 3.2. of the report, be noted.
2. The update on the Town Centre Strategy and formation of a Town Centre Action Group as set out in paragraphs 4.1. to 4.3. of the report be noted.
3. The update on the District Council's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as set out in paragraphs 5.1. to 5.5. of the report be noted.
4. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

11. Exempt Business

It was Resolved that:

The public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded from the Meeting under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

This item was confidential for Members of the Council only in accordance with Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

12. Town Centre Events Programme

- 12.1. The Town Clerk updated Members on progress to deliver a Christmas market in the Town Centre. Research had demonstrated that the location of the market was fundamental to its success and the High Street had been identified as the most suitable location.
- 12.2. The Christmas market would be operating for longer hours and throughout the week for the five weeks leading up to Christmas. Acknowledging the impact for the existing Market, a meeting had been called to explain the Town Council's plans and put forward proposals to support the Friday Market during this period and allay stall holders' concerns. It was noted that the District Council as the Licensing Authority and a partner in the Town Centre Events Programme was also supportive of the proposed plan.
- 12.3. The committee proceeded to consider the current position. The Christmas market was a key element of the Town Council's programme of events for the Town Centre to mark the completion of the public realm improvement works. It was also a long-held ambition of the Town Council to host a prominent event in the High Street that would fulfil the objectives of the Town Centre Strategy attracting people to visit and spend in the locality, whilst also enjoying their time there. The committee wished to maximise the benefit of the recently completed improvements to the public realm and re-affirmed its position.
- 12.4. Turning to the German style Christmas market proposal, the committee had several questions and sought clarity on the reputation and experience of the contractor and assurance that the stalls would complement the existing offer in the High Street.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. The update on Town Centre events programme including the Love Local Arts summer programme, Public Realm launch, and the German Style Christmas market be noted.
2. The Town Council's Standing Orders be waived, and authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Committee Chair and Chair of the Town Centre Action Group (the Mayor) to appoint a specialist contractor for the Christmas market as set out in paragraphs

6.4 to 6.8 of the report, with officers seeking assurance from the contractor as set out in minute 14.4 above.

The meeting closed at 7:49 pm.

CHAIR

UNAPPROVED

Littlehampton Town Council

Non-Confidential

Full Council

Date: 22 June 2023

Report by: The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Subject: Annual Governance Statement 2022 to 2023 – Section 1 of the Annual Return

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council is being asked to approve and adopt the 2022 to 2023 Annual Governance and Accountability Return which is the Statutory Statement of Accounts for the Council as at 31 March 2023 – Appendix 1. In doing so, the Council is also required to review the effectiveness of the system of internal control and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2022 to 2023 – Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return – accordingly.

2. Recommendations

2.1. Council is recommended to resolve that:

1. To the best of its knowledge and belief, with respect to the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2023, it has complied with the eight statements.
2. The Mayor, as Chairman of the Council, and the Clerk be authorised to sign Section 1 of the 2022 to 2023 Annual Return on behalf of the Council.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council is required to complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return which comprises the Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts and to have it approved by Council by 30 June each year.
- 3.2. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts.
- 3.3. The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is for an authority to report publicly on its arrangements for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law, regulations and proper practices and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.

- 3.4. Smaller authorities – i.e. authorities with a gross annual income and expenditure for the year that does not exceed £6.5 million – prepare their annual governance statement by completing Section 1 of the Annual Return. This is in the form of a number of statements, known as assertions, to which the authority needs to answer, ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.
- 3.5. The authority needs to have appropriate evidence to support a ‘Yes’ answer to an assertion, for example a reference in a set of formal minutes. If an authority is not able to respond ‘Yes’ to any assertion, it needs to provide an explanation to the external auditor on a separate sheet describing how the authority will address the weaknesses identified.
- 3.6. The Auditor’s job is to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and supporting documentation and report whether any matters have come to their attention that give cause for concern that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. This is a negative assurance Audit.

4. Annual Governance Statement

- 4.1. The Annual Governance Statement is signed on behalf of the Council by the Chair and Town Clerk.
- 4.2. Councils are expected to make a number of representations and assertions in eight statements of assurance, which together comprise the Annual Governance Statement, about the accountability of the Council. The statements are explained in the following table;

Statement	Explanatory note	Evidence
1. ‘We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements’.	Through the act of formally approving the accounts the Council asserts that it has prepared those accounts in the way prescribed by law and in accordance with proper practices.	There are accounting systems in place and observed. The accounting system is used to prepare the accounting statements.
2. ‘We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.’	This statement covers the Council’s responsibility to ensure that its affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of financial conduct and arrangements exist to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. The Council also asserts that it has tested those arrangements at least once in the year to make sure they are working in an adequate and effective way.	Completed monthly bank reconciliations and investments are signed off by the Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee at least once in each quarter. All Committees receive periodic reports on income and expenditure as they relate to their budgets and significant variances are highlighted. The Governance and Audit Committee reviewed the Town Council’s Internal Controls at its meeting on 8 February 2022 and

Statement	Explanatory note	Evidence
		noted that the Internal Auditor assessed the effectiveness of the Town Council's Internal Controls as part of his inspection.
<p>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 the Council to conduct its business or on its finances.'</p> <p>4. 'We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.'</p>	<p>These statements cover the local Council's responsibility to act within the law and to put in place proper arrangements to ensure that its financial affairs are conducted in accordance with the law and relevant regulations, including providing the opportunity for electors to exercise their rights to inspect the financial records and ask questions of the auditor. The third statement confirms that the Council has only done what it has the legal power to do and the fourth statement, confirms that it has during the year allowed all persons who may be interested the opportunity to exercise their rights.</p>	<p>The Town Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation are reviewed at least annually. The Notice of Electors' Rights is placed on the Town Council's website and notice boards in accordance with the Regulations and can be inspected by arrangement with the Town Clerk or Responsible Financial Officer. Expenditure over £500 is published on the website together with internal and external audit reports, the Council Budget, Members Allowances, the Annual Investment Statement and the Annual Return.</p>
<p>5. 'We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and or external insurance cover where required.'</p> <p>6. 'We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit of the Council's accounting records and control systems.'</p> <p>7. 'We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.'</p>	<p>These representations cover the Council's responsibility to develop, implement and regularly monitor the effectiveness of systems of internal control covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall control environment, including internal audit; • the identification, evaluation and management of operational and financial risks; • budgetary control and monitoring arrangements; and • the documentation and application of control procedures. 	<p>Under the Town Council's Scheme of Delegation to Committees, the Governance and Audit Committee has oversight of Governance, Standards, Audit and Performance matters. The Committee meets at least twice a year and follows a programme of work designed to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the Town Council's policies and procedures in respect of these matters. This includes reviewing the Internal Audit reports, of which there are two per year.</p>

Statement	Explanatory note	Evidence
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 the Council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.'	This statement covers the Council's responsibility to conduct its financial affairs and to put in place proper arrangements to ensure that its financial standing is soundly based. This statement provides assurance that the Council has considered and disclosed in the Annual Return all matters relevant to its business, including any relevant events which have taken place in the period between the end of the financial year being reported and the date of the Annual Return, which could have an impact on its ability to continue its work.	The Annual Return is presented to Full Council for approval.
9. Trust Funds	Not applicable	

- 4.3. The Town Council is able to respond positively to all of the afore mentioned statements.

5. Internal Audit

- 5.1. The Internal Auditor has completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report as part of the Annual Return – Appendix 1, page 3.
- 5.2. The actual detailed internal auditor's report is attached as Appendix 2 and will be reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 4 July 2023.

Laura Chrysostomou
Town Clerk

Jon Short
Responsible Financial Officer

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3

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

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

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2023**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2023**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

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

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

Publication Requirements

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

Before 1 July 2023 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2022/23**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2022/23**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2023 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

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

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

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2023.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2022) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2023).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2023**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

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

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

<https://www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk/how-we-spend>

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.	✓		
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

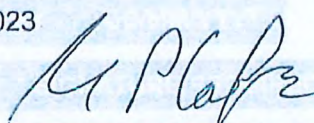
02/11/2022

30/05/2023

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

MIKE PLATTEN CPFA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

31/05/2023

*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).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

LITTLEHAMPTON 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' 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
			✓

*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:

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

<https://www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk/> AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

April Skies

Accounting

Jon Short - RFO

Littlehampton Town Council

31 May 2023

Dear Jon

Littlehampton Town Council - Internal Audit 2022-23

The internal audit of Littlehampton Town Council for the 2022-23 financial year is now complete. I am pleased to be able to report that I have signed off the internal audit section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2022-23 with no comments.

As stated in the engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete Section 4 of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year.

In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by the Audit Practices Board and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements and management information – that is the job of external audit.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These control assertions are set out below, together with the results of my internal audit work for 2022-23. Recommendations are at Appendix A. At Appendix B I list tests not completed at this audit as they are not relevant to this Council.

The audit was carried out in two stages. The interim audit was carried out on 2 November 2022, this concentrated on in year financial transactions and governance controls. I visited the Council for the final audit on 30 May, this concentrated on the statement of accounts and transactions from the second half of the financial year.

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☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

Company Registration Number 14174016
6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

A: Books of Account

Interim Audit

The Council continues to use RBS Omega, an industry specific accounting package. I have tested the brought forward balances against the audited prior year annual return and can confirm these have been brought forward correctly. Box 7 on the audited accounts for 21-22 was £2,686,463. This agrees to the period 0 balance sheet on RBS.

The Omega system is used to report and record the financial transactions of the Council, it is used to make bookings for hires, allotments, and to manage the fixed asset register. A review of the cashbook shows that all data fields are being entered, supporting documentation is easily located from references recorded on the general ledger. Reconciliations tested were up to date at the time of the audit. Budget has been set aside to install the purchase ledger for 23-24, the aim is to have this operational for the new financial year.

I have confirmed that the Council's VAT returns are up to date, with the most recent claim for the 3 months to 30 September 2022, submitted to HMRC on 31.10.22. I checked that balances in the return could be agreed to schedules produced by the accounting system. The VAT claim was submitted using Omega digital submission process.

I checked access controls to the Council's accounting system. I was able to confirm that all access levels were appropriate for the officers concerned.

Final Audit

The accounting statements have been agreed back to balance sheet and income and expenditure reports produced from the RBS Accounting system. All comparatives reported in the financial statements have been agreed back to the audited 2021-22 accounts, as published on the Council website. An error was identified in comparative figures for 21-22 – this was pointed out to the RFO and the accounts have been corrected.

The Council's year end VAT return has been completed, and VAT reclaimed can be agreed to a schedule of transactions extracted from RBS. VAT outstanding on the balance sheet agrees to the VAT return. The VAT return has been submitted to HRMC

The Council reviewed my interim audit report at the February 2023 meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee – minute 17.2

I have no recommendations in this area.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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B: Financial Regulations & Payments

Interim Audit

Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were reviewed at Governance and Audit Committee in February 2022. The Littlehampton documents are based on NALC templates.

Council is given authority to spend via the annual budget process. The Council has a robust procedure in place to ensure that all expenditure is authorised in line with financial regulations. I selected a sample of transactions from the cashbook for the period April to September 2022. I was able to confirm for all transactions that:

- Transactions could be agreed back to invoice
- RFO had certified the invoice as ready for payment – goods/services received
- Payment approval slip was on file, authorized by RFO plus one councillor, in line with financial regulation requirements
- VAT accounting correct
- Expenditure appropriate for the Council
- Purchase order signed off by an officer not involved in payment process
- Payment set up at bank by Finance Officer and authorised by Clerk

Final Audit

Non pay expenditure per box 6 to the accounts amounted to £1,083,804, up from £607,995 in 2021-22.

I tested 5 further expenditure transactions, selected at random from cashbooks for months 6-13. All transactions were agreed from cashbook to invoice. All expenditure appeared appropriate for this Council. All payments have been authorised by RFO and councillor, as required by financial regulations, this is evidenced by signature on payment lists. VAT accounting was correct. I am therefore satisfied that the Council continues to follow financial regulations for all transactions tested.

C: Risk Management & Insurance

Interim Audit

The Council has a corporate risk management strategy in place and monitors and reviews risk on an ongoing basis. LCRS risk register has recently been updated and sent to Heads of Department for review. This will be reported to Governance and Audit Committee in February, and reviewed by Full Council in March. The Council is meeting obligations in the area of risk management.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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The Council is in year three of a 3-year deal with Zurich Municipal. I have seen the insurance policy; insurance was in date at the time of my audit with an expiry date of 1 October 2023. Money cover is set at £250K. It is my opinion that this is too low, given the cash and investment holdings at the Council. Money cover should therefore be discussed with the insurers. Asset cover appeared consistent with the asset register. Building surveys have recently been commissioned for Manor House and Southfield Jubilee Centre. Information from these surveys will be fed back to the insurers.

I confirmed that back up of data on the RBS Omega system is taken daily. This is stored in the E drive on the Council network. I have asked the RFO to confirm that this is covered by the back up and recovery process managed by the Council's IT provider.

I confirmed that my most recent internal audit report was properly considered by Councillors at the July meeting of Governance and Audit Committee and an appropriate minute recorded. Audit recommendations raised at last audit have been followed up, see appendix A.

Final audit

The Council risk assessment was reviewed at the Governance and Audit Committee in February 2023 – minute 17.5. This was then considered at the Full Council meeting in March 2023 and an appropriate minute recorded –(87.1.2.3)

I reviewed the risk assessment. There is clear evidence of review and update in the course of the financial year. The finance section of the risk assessment records appropriate risks to the Council, and I confirmed that IT back-ups are properly considered in the computing section of the risk assessment.

I discussed the recommendation raised at the interim audit, regarding the level of fidelity insurance cover at the Council with the RFO. It was agreed that this will be discussed with the insurer at next insurance renewal, so that the Council understands the level of coverage in place, and can then decide whether to increase cover, or to manage risk via the risk register.

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting the requirements of this control objective.

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D. Budget, Precept & Reserves

Interim Audit

The Council is the process of preparing the budgets for 23-24. The RFO has shared the budget timetable with me. Service Manager meetings were held in October. Subsequent meetings have been held with the leader of each political group. Chair and Vice-chair meetings are scheduled for November. Inflationary pressures, notably utility and salary bills are being taken into consideration in budget planning. Draft budgets are due to be reviewed by Committees in December, with final approval of budget and precept for 22-23 due at Full Council in January 2023. All precepting authority deadlines should therefore be met.

I have confirmed that regular budget monitoring reports are issued to committees, in line with financial regulations. I was able to confirm that budget monitoring reports for quarter 2, 2022-23 were been presented to Policy and Finance Committee in October 2022. I will review Council reserves at my year end audit.

Final Audit

Reserves at 31 March 2023 were £2,886,790 (2021-22 £2,696,463).

Earmarked reserves were £2,414,787. These are held for the following reasons

Earmarked Reserve	£ at 31.3.23
Projects	714,473
Capital	428,133
Vehicle Maintenance	3,732
Building Maintenance	97,230
Museum	13,673
Capital Receipts	1,155,055

General reserves at year end were £452K. The Council also holds £500K in long term investments, so total general reserves amount to around 70% of precept. This is within recommended levels set out in the NALC Practitioners' Guide, and a significant reserve balance is sensible for a Council like Littlehampton, which has a large fixed asset base and material unpredictable income streams. With well-developed earmarked and general reserves, the Council's financial position is satisfactory.

Budgets and precept for 23-24 were approved at the Full Council meeting in 19 January (minute 76.2.5.) A precept of £1,446,520 was set. A three year budget was approved, after detailed consideration of cost pressures. This is published on the Council's website. The Council clearly considers its reserve position in this three year budget plan. The capital programme, including funding for 3 years to 25-26 was also approved at the January meeting.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting the requirements of this control objective.

E: Income **Interim Audit**

I confirmed fees and charges for 22-23 had been properly approved at a meeting of the Council - Community Resources Committee – December 2021

I tested a sample of income credits selected at random from the cashbook for the first 6 months of the financial year. For each transaction I tested:

- Cashbook could be agreed to invoice
- VAT accounting correct on invoice
- Invoice agreed to approved rates of fees and charges , or to other documentation (eg bank credit for interest payment on investments)
- Cashbook entry agreed to bank

I was able to confirm correct invoicing for all transactions audited.

I have reviewed the Council's debtors ledger. The Council has made significant progress in this area and is continuing to pursue outstanding debts, with regular review of all debts once a week. The Council has resolved to pursue all outstanding debts, and as yet nothing has been considered for write-off. I will review further at my final audit.

Final Audit

Precept per box 2 to the accounts was £1,366,037 (21-22 £1,311,681). This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by central government.

Income per box 3 to the accounts was £623,289 (21-22 £101,622).

I reviewed the sales ledger at the date of the audit (30 May). Debts outstanding were £143K, of which around £40K was more than 60 days old. I am pleased to note that the Council has set aside staffing resource of around 5 hours a week to manage the sales ledger. I recommend that this time is used to ensure that as few debts as possible proceed beyond 30 days - contact by phone or email should be made with any debtors reaching this point.

I also recommend that the Council reviews income procedures further.

- Payment in advance should be the default position, and Council terms and conditions should be amended to reflect this. Payment in arrears should only be acceptable for circumstances such as late amendments to hire, additional materials etc
- Allotment income collection should be automated as much as possible. Consideration should be given to collection of income using an annual direct debit
- The Council should cease to accept cash or cheques, apart from certain exceptional circumstances.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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I carried out further testing of income from the final 6 months of 22-23. For the transactions sampled I was able to confirm

- Cashbook could be agreed to invoice
- VAT accounting correct on invoice
- Invoice agreed to approved rates of fees and charges , or to other documentation (eg notification on quarterly statement for interest)
- Cashbook entry agreed to bank

I was able to confirm correct accounting for all transactions audited.

F. Petty Cash

Petty cash at year end was £106. This was counted by the Finance Assistant and countersigned by the RFO.

G. Payroll

Interim Audit

There has been no change to the payroll system in 2022-23. The Council processes payroll in house using Sage 50 payroll. The RFO inputs all payroll changes and expense claims each month. The payroll is processed and a telepay document is produced and sent to the bank. Payroll is reviewed and authorised by the Clerk. Payments are then made electronically to staff.

I tested the August 2022 payroll in detail. I was able to confirm the payroll posted to the general ledger back to the telepay document that had been authorised by the Clerk and by the RFO. I agreed pay for 3 officers back to payslips, rates of pay were checked back to appropriate NJC scales. All payroll tested was paid in accordance with these payscales, and I am therefore satisfied that the Council has satisfactory controls over payroll.

I checked the Council's HMRC account. The Council has no overdue liabilities.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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Final Audit

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £715,295 (21-22 £650,949). I have reviewed RBS reports and it appears that correct costs have been included within the staffing costs cell on the statement of accounts.

I carried out further testing of salary payments made to staff in February 2023. I agreed ledger payments back to summary payroll reporting for the month. From there I selected 4 staff members. I tested that:

- Payslip produced for all staff
- Basic pay per payroll could be reconciled back to appropriate NJC pay grade, once working hours adjustments had been made.
- Payment recorded on ledger agreed to payroll records

I also confirmed payments had been made to HMRC and that there were no overdue payments as recorded on HMRC account at time of my audit.

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting the requirements of this control objective.

H. Assets and Investments

Final Audit

Fixed assets per box 9 to the accounts were £ 3,029,666 (21/22 - £3,147,144 RESTATED).

I have agreed the balance in the accounts back to the asset register. The asset register appears complete and to record assets at cost or proxy cost, as required by regulations, with sufficient detail to locate all assets listed.

The 21-22 balance for fixed assets was restated by £287K. This is because of an incorrect accounting treatment of the Wick Road Youth Centre in 21-22. This building has now been written off of the asset register as it has been disposed of.

I also noted that £30K of additions had been incorrectly brought forward in the fixed asset register. These additions duplicated transactions posted to the asset register in 21-22 – this has now been corrected. The RFO confirmed that there have been no fixed asset additions in 22-23. I checked that the LAPF investment balance recorded on the fixed asset register is still in place, by reviewing the 31 March 23 statement. This is recorded at the investment cost of £500K, as required by the Practitioners' Guide.

The Council may wish to consider adding the Fixed Asset module to the RBS accounting system, this would improve fixed asset accounting and reporting .

I am satisfied that the asset register can be reconciled to the fixed asset balance recorded in the accounts.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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I: Bank Reconciliations

Interim Audit

Reconciliations for all bank accounts are carried out regularly and in accordance with regulations. This is clearly evidenced in the Council's bank reconciliation file. The September 2022 bank reconciliation was tested in detail. I confirmed the following.

- The face of the bank statements and the bank reconciliations had been signed off by the reviewing councillor
- All balances on the bank reconciliation were agreed back to bank statements / cashbooks
- Cashbook /bank statement differences were explained by schedules of unpresented cheques / lodgments. These have now been eliminated as the Council makes full use of electronic banking
- Arithmetic checked for accuracy

The Council carried out the annual review of the investment strategy at the Policy and Finance Committee meeting in March 2022 (minute 36.2). The next annual review will need to consider:

- Reduced balances for investment, as the Council progresses capital projects
- Improved rates of interest offered by financial institutions

Final Audit

Borrowings per box 10 to the accounts were £nil (21-22 £ nil)

Cash per box 8 to the accounts was £2,870,163 (21-22 £2,779,610)

I reperformed the year end bank reconciliations, and was able to agree balances on bank reconciliations back to bank statements and to the RBS system. All year end reconciliations had been reviewed by a councillor by the time of my audit and this review evidenced.

I have no recommendations to raise in this area.

J. Year-end accounts

Final Audit

LTC has produced accounts on an accruals basis, this is required as income / expenditure is above £200k. A reconciliation between Box 7-8 of the accounts has been prepared, for external audit review, and creditor and debtor listings support this reconciliation.

An explanation of year-on-year variances has also been prepared and provides detailed explanations for review by external audit.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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L: Exercise of Public Rights - Inspection of Accounts

Inspection periods for 2021-22 accounts were set as follows

Inspection - Key date	2021-22 Actual
Accounts approved at Full Council	23 June
Date Inspection Notice Issued and how published	24 June – website
Inspection period begins	27 June
Inspection period ends	5 August
Correct length	Yes 30 working days

All regulatory requirements were met.

L: : The Authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements

As a larger Council, with income / expenditure in excess of £200K, LTC is required to follow the 2015 Transparency Code. I was able to confirm that data required by the Code could be located at various pages on the Council website, and specifically confirmed that the following information was up to date

- Grants awarded – A separate page lists all grant awards made in March 2023, all grant awards and service level agreements in place in 22-23 are listed
- Payments over £500 - updated to the end of March 2023

I am satisfied the Council has met obligations in this regard.

N: Publication requirements 2021-2 AGAR

The Council has published the Accounts ,Annual Governance Statement and the external audit certificate on the Council website. The Conclusion of Audit Certificate was published 28 September 2022 before the statutory deadline of 30 September. The Council has met its obligations in this area. The auditors raised a minor point regarding the setting of the inspection period in the other matters section of their certificate. There is nothing that needs to be taken forward for 22-23. There is an archive of AGAR documentation on the website as required by regulations.

0. Trusteeship

Council not a trustee, therefore test not applicable at this Council.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilsbies.co.uk

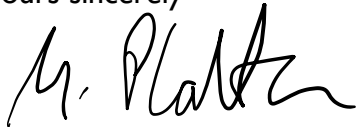
Company Registration Number 14174016
6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

April Skies

Accounting

I attach my invoice for your consideration, together with the internal audit report from the AGAR. I would like to record my thanks to you and Claire for your help with the audit and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance. I look forward to working with you again in 23-24.

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

Company Registration Number 14174016
6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

Matters Arising 22-23 Interim Audit

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
Money cover is set at £250K. It is my opinion that this is too low, given the cash and investment holdings at the Council.	Money cover should be discussed with the insurers.	Not actioned at present - to be followed up at next insurance renewal.

Matters Arising 22-23 Final Audit

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
Money cover is set at £250K. It is my opinion that this is too low, given the cash and investment holdings at the Council.	Money cover should be discussed with the insurers. (point reraised from interim audit)	
I am pleased to note that the Council has set aside staffing resource of around 5 hours a week to manage the sales ledger.	I recommend that this time is used to ensure that as few debts as possible proceed beyond 30 days - contact by phone or email should be made with any debtors reaching this point	
I recommend that the Council reviews income procedures further. -	Payment in advance should be the default position, and Council hire terms and conditions should be amended to reflect this. Payment in arrears should only be acceptable for circumstances such as late	

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	amendments to hire, additional materials etc	
Allotment income collection should be automated as much as possible	Consideration should be given to collection of income using an annual direct debit	
Income payments	The Council should cease to accept cash or cheques for payment of bills, apart from certain exceptional circumstances	
Fixed Assets	The Council may wish to consider adding the Fixed Asset module to the RBS accounting system, this would improve fixed asset accounting and reporting .	

☎ 07958 990310

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Appendix B

Internal Audit Control Objectives – Marked as not covered

Control Objective	Area for Audit	Why this has not been audited
K	Exemption from limited assurance review	Council had limited assurance review in 22-23
O	Trust Funds	No trusts at this council

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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Littlehampton Town Council

Non-Confidential

Full Council

Date: 22 June 2023

Report by: The Town Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer

Subject: Statement of Accounts – Annual Return 2022 to 2023 – Section 2 of the Annual Return

1. Summary

- 1.1. Attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for Council's consideration and approval, is the 2022 to 2023 Accounting Statement, which is the Statutory Statement of Accounts for the Council as of 31 March 2023.

2. Recommendation

2.1. Council is Recommended to Resolve to:

1. Approve the Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023.
2. Authorise the Mayor, as Chairman of the Council, to sign Section 2 of the 2022 to 2023 Annual Governance and Accountability Return on behalf of the Council.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council is required to produce a Statement of Accounts and have it approved by Council by 30 June each year.
- 3.2. The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2022 to 2023 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2023.
- 3.3. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with The Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners' Guide (England) 2021 to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at 31 March 2023 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.
- 3.4. The Auditor's job is to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and supporting documentation and report whether any matters have come to their attention that give cause for concern that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. This is a negative assurance Audit.
- 3.5. The Accounting Statement is attached as Appendix 1. It forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and comprises four linked

sections, which should be read as a whole – see Appendix 1 of the previous report on this agenda.

- The Internal Audit Report
- The Annual Governance Statement – this was the subject of the previous report on this agenda
- The Accounting Statements
- The External Auditors certificate and opinion – to be completed after the audit

3.6. In addition to the Accounting Statements as set out in the Annual Return the External Auditor has also asked for:

- A copy of bank statements for all accounts showing the balance at 31 March 2023
- Confirmation that arrangements are in place to ensure systems of internal control are fully documented and provide details of how this was administered and monitored during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023
- Supply a breakdown of the year end reserves held by the Council identifying any amounts included that relate to specific projects or earmarked funds

3.7. Other points to note in respect of the Accounting Statement are:

- Boxes 1 and 7 are the total useable reserves i.e., the General Reserve plus Earmarked Reserves.
- Box 7 is adjusted for Debtors and Creditors to give Box 8 the cash at bank and in hand figure.
- Box 9 is the total book value of Fixed Assets without any deduction for depreciation. Land and buildings are at revalued cost as at 31st March 2009, all other assets are at cost and in accordance with the Council's Asset Policy.

4. Annual Governance Statement

4.1. The Annual Governance Statement is signed on behalf of the Council by the Chair and Town Clerk and was the subject of an earlier report to this meeting.

5. Internal Audit

5.1. The Internal Auditor has completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report as part of the Annual Return – see Appendix 1 of the previous report on this agenda, page 3.

5.2. The full detailed report from the internal auditor was attached as Appendix 2 of the previous report on this agenda. This will be reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 4 July 2023.

Laura Chrysostomou
Town Clerk

Jon Short
Responsible Financial Officer

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	2,572,592	2,696,463	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	1,311,681	1,366,037	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	101,622	623,389	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	650,949	715,295	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	30,488	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	607,995	1,083,804	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	2,696,463	2,886,790	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	2,779,610	2,870,163	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	(RESTATE) 3,147,744	3,029,666	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

15/06/2023

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

DDMMYYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of

LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

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

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 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 *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

COMMITTEE

Littlehampton Town Council

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 March 2023

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

31/03/2023	BUS INSTANT ACCESS	1,284,105.07	
31/03/2023	BUSINESS ACCOUNT (CURRENT)	345.34	
31/03/2023	FIXED INTEREST	1,375,000.00	
31/03/2023	PSDF	210,462.83	
			2,869,913.24

Other Cash & Bank Balances

250.00

2,870,163.24

Receipts not on Bank Statement

0.00

Closing Balance

2,870,163.24

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	CURRENT BANK ACCOUNT	2,869,913.24
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	250.00
	Total Cash & Bank Balances	<hr/> 2,870,163.24 <hr/>

Littlehampton Town Council

Supporting Reserves Reconciliation for ANNUAL RETURN 31 March 2023

Explains the difference between boxes 7 & 8 on the Annual Return

<u>Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	
	Total Reserves	2,696,463.49	2,886,789.65	7
101	DEBTORS	34,678.19	143,032.96	
105	VAT	14,411.14	77,100.62	
110	PREPAYMENTS	56,194.66	25,335.56	
515	PAYE/ NI DUE	11,040.59	0.00	
517	SUPERANNUATION DUE	10,313.21	0.00	
	Less Total Debtors	126,637.79	245,469.14	
501	CREDITORS	74,507.99	88,370.93	
506	Mayors charity 21/22	0.00	213.23	
507	Mayors charity 22/23	0.00	385.51	
510	ACCRUALS	11,530.50	10,017.45	
517	SUPERANNUATION DUE	0.00	0.30	
536	SJC KEY DEPOSIT	1,203.88	1,198.88	
537	ALLOTMENT KEY DEPOSIT	2,394.00	3,174.00	
538	CLYMPING GAP PARTNERSHIP	891.85	891.85	
539	ALLOTMENT PLOT DEPOSIT	14,810.00	17,410.00	
540	30AU FUND	618.00	598.00	
545	MORRISONS COMMUNITY	97,487.00	97,487.00	
547	MORRISONS WICK PARADE	65.47	65.47	
548	CRP GRANT	1,492.60	1,492.60	
560	RECEIPTS IN ADVANCE	2,383.34	4,237.51	
565	HOLDING DEPOSITS	2,400.00	3,300.00	
	Plus Total Creditors	209,784.63	228,842.73	
	Equals Total Cash and Bank Accounts	2,779,610.33	2,870,163.24	8
201	CURRENT BANK ACCOUNT	2,779,360.33	2,869,913.24	
230	PETTY CASH	250.00	250.00	
	Total Cash and Bank Accounts	2,779,610.33	2,870,163.24	

Explanation of Variances

	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input, DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	2,572,592	2,596,463				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required – Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	1,311,681	1,366,037	54,356	4.14%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	101,622	623,389	521,767	513.44%	YES		The additional receipts were due to S106 funding for parks (£125K), MUGA funding for a new community centre (£78K) and S106 funding for our new community centre (£263K)
4 Staff Costs	550,349	716,295	64,346	9.88%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	507,995	1,083,804	475,809	78.28%	YES		The additional payments are towards our new community centre - Spend to date £480K
7 Balances Carried Forward	2,696,463	2,886,790				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED EXPLANATION REQUIRED ON RESERVES TAB AS TO WHY CARRY FORWARD RESERVES ARE GREATER THAN TWICE INCOME FROM LOCAL TAXATION/LEVIES	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	2,779,510	2,870,163			YES	VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments	2,890,211	3,060,211	170,000	5.88%	YES		The variance is due to the incorrect figure being reported last financial year when the council sold a property.
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

Explanation for 'high' reserves

(Please complete the highlighted boxes.)

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

	£	£	£
Earmarked reserves:			
Projects	£714,474		
Capital	£428,134		
Vehicle/Plant Maintenance	£3,732		
Project 82	£0		
Building Maintenance	£97,231		
Museum	£13,674		
Capital Receipts Reserve	£1,155,056		
			<u>£2,412,300</u>
General reserve			<u>£474,490</u>
			<u>£474,490</u>
Total reserves (must agree to Box 7)			<u>£2,886,790</u>

Box 7 is more than twice Box 2 because of a capital receipt for the sale of land, £1,362,341 which is held in Capital Receipts Reserve for future projects such as the new community centre currently being built. In addition, the Town Council holds earmarked reserves for specific projects, building maintenance and vehicle replacement.