WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR 2019-2020)

Accounts for year ending 31st March 2020

- 1. Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights to inspect the AGAR 2019-2020
- 2. Internal Audit Report 2019-2020
- 3. Annual Internal Audit Report 2019-2020
- 4. Annual Governance Statement 2019-2020
- 5. Accounting Statement for 2019-2020
- 6. Bank Account Reconciliation as at 31st March 2020
- 7. Explanation of Variances from previous years.

Any resident wishing to inspect the AGAR should also refer to the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held 4th May 2020 for confirmation that the AGAR returns have been agreed by the Parish Council. Details of he Accounts 2019-2020 are available elsewhere on this section of the website.

Amy Miller
Clerk and RFO
2nd June 2020

WHAT SMALLER AUTHORITIES NEED TO DO TO ADVERTISE THE PERIOD DURING WHICH ELECTORS AND INTERESTED PERSONS MAY EXERCISE RIGHTS RELATING TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 require that:

- 1. The accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested, during a period of 30 working days set by the smaller authority that starts on or before 1 September 2020.
- 2. The period referred to in paragraph (1) starts with the day on which the period for the exercise of public rights is treated as having been commenced i.e. the day following the day on which all of the obligations in paragraph (3) below have been fulfilled.
- 3. The responsible financial officer for a relevant authority must, on behalf of that authority, publish (which must include publication on the authority's website):
 - (a) the Accounting Statements (i.e. Section 2 of either Part 2 or 3, whichever is relevant, of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)), accompanied by:
 - (i) a declaration, signed by that officer to the effect that the status of the Accounting Statements are unaudited and that the Accounting Statements as published may be subject to change;
 - (ii) the Annual Governance Statement (i.e. Section 1 of either Part 2 or Part 3, whichever is relevant, of the AGAR); and
 - (b) a statement that sets out-
 - (i) the period for the exercise of public rights;
 - (ii) details of the manner in which notice should be given of an intention to inspect the accounting records and other documents;
 - (iii) the name and address of the local auditor;
 - (iv) the provisions contained in section 26 (inspection of documents etc.) and section 27 (right to make objections at audit) of the Act, as they have effect in relation to the authority in question;

HOW DO YOU DO IT?

- You will meet statutory requirements if you fully and accurately complete the notice of public rights pro forma in this document, and
- 2. Publish (including publication on the smaller authority's website) the following documents, the day before the public rights period commences:
 - a. the approved Sections 1 and 2 of either Part 2 or 3, whichever is relevant to your smaller authority, of the AGAR; and
 - the completed Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return. Please note that we have pre-completed it with the following suggested dates: Monday 15 June Friday 24 July 2020. (The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Tuesday 1 September Monday 12 October 2020); and
 - C. the notes which accompany the Notice (Local authority accounts: a summary of your rights).

WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 25, 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/404)

1. Date of announcement 2ND June 2020 (a) Insert date of placing of the second seco

2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.

Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2020, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:

(b) Amy Miller – Responsible Financial Officer 25 Main Street Woodnewton PE8 5EB woodnewtonpc@gmail.com

commencing on (c) Monday 8th June 2020 and ending on (d) Friday 17th July 2020

- 3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:
 - The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and
 - The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which
 the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to
 the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice
 of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the
 smaller authority.

The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.

4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:

PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team)
15 Westferry Circus
Canary Wharf
London E14 4HD
(sba@pkf-littlejohn.com)

5. This announcement is made by Amy Miller - Responsible Financial Officer

(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below

- (b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts
- (c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below
- (d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must start on or before 1 September 2020.

 (e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

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

The basic position

The <u>Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014</u> (the Act) governs the work of auditors appointed to smaller authorities. This summary explains the provisions contained in Sections 26 and 27 of the Act. The Act, the <u>Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015</u> and the <u>Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment)</u> Regulations 2020 also cover the duties, responsibilities and rights of smaller authorities, other organisations and the public concerning the accounts being audited.

As a local elector, or an interested person, you have certain legal rights in respect of the accounting records of smaller authorities. As an interested person you can inspect accounting records and related documents. If you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them. You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the smaller authority form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.

The right to inspect the accounting records

Any interested person can inspect the accounting records, which includes but is not limited to local electors. You can inspect the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records. You can copy all, or part, of these records or documents. Your inspection must be about the accounts, or relate to an item in the accounts. You cannot, for example, inspect or copy documents unrelated to the accounts, or that include personal information (Section 26(6) - (10)) of the Act explains what is meant by personal information). You cannot inspect information which is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is information which would prejudice commercial confidentiality if it was released to the public and there is not, set against this, a very strong reason in the public interest why it should nevertheless be disclosed.

When smaller authorities have finished preparing accounts for the financial year and approved them, they must publish them (including on a website). There must be a 30 working day period, called the 'period for the exercise of public rights', during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounting records. Smaller authorities must tell the public, including advertising this on their website, that the accounting records and related documents are available to inspect. By arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records. You may have to pay a copying charge. Legislative changes have been made as a result of the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus for the 2019/20 reporting year which mean that there is no requirement for a common period for public rights. The period for the exercise of public rights must however commence on or before 1 September 2020. The advertisement must set out the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, how you can communicate to the smaller authority that you wish to inspect the accounting records and related documents, the name and address of the auditor, and the relevant legislation that governs the inspection of accounts and objections.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

You should first ask your smaller authority about the accounting records, since they hold all the details. If you are a local elector, your right to ask questions of the external auditor is enshrined in law. However, while the auditor will answer your questions where possible, they are not always obliged to do so. For example, the question might be better answered by another organisation, require investigation beyond the auditor's remit, or involve disproportionate cost (which is borne by the local taxpayer). Give your smaller authority the opportunity first to explain anything in the accounting records that you are unsure about. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you can question the external auditor about the accounting records.

The law limits the time available for you formally to ask questions. This must be done in the period for the exercise of public rights, so let the external auditor know your concern as soon as possible. The

advertisement or notice that tells you the accounting records are available to inspect will also give the period for the exercise of public rights during which you may ask the auditor questions, which here means formally asking questions under the Act. You can ask someone to represent you when asking the external auditor questions.

Before you ask the external auditor any questions, inspect the accounting records fully, so you know what they contain. Please remember that you cannot formally ask questions, under the Act, after the end of the period for the exercise of public rights. You may ask your smaller authority other questions about their accounts for any year, at any time. But these are not questions under the Act.

You can ask the external auditor questions about an item in the accounting records for the financial year being audited. However, your right to ask the external auditor questions is limited. The external auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions. The external auditor cannot answer questions about policies, finances, procedures or anything else unless it is directly relevant to an item in the accounting records. Remember that your questions must always be about facts, not opinions. To avoid misunderstanding, we recommend that you always put your questions in writing.

The right to make objections at audit

You have inspected the accounting records and asked your questions of the smaller authority. Now you may wish to object to the accounts on the basis that an item in them is in your view unlawful or there are matters of wider concern arising from the smaller authority's finances. A local government elector can ask the external auditor to apply to the High Court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, or to issue a report on matters which are in the public interest. You must tell the external auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you think the item is unlawful, or why you think that a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide the external auditor with the evidence you have to support your objection. Disagreeing with income or spending does not make it unlawful. To object to the accounts you must write to the external auditor stating you want to make an objection, including the information and evidence below and you must send a copy to the smaller authority. The notice must include:

- confirmation that you are an elector in the smaller authority's area;
- why you are objecting to the accounts and the facts on which you rely;
- details of any item in the accounts that you think is unlawful; and
- details of any matter about which you think the external auditor should make a public interest report.

Other than it must be in writing, there is no set format for objecting. You can only ask the external auditor to act within the powers available under the <u>Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014</u>.

A final word

You may not use this 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor. Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved, they will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. They may also decide not to consider an objection if they think that it is frivolous or vexatious, or if it repeats an objection already considered. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision not to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, you will have to pay for the action yourself.

For more detailed guidance on public rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication <u>Local authority accounts: A guide to your rights</u> are available from the NAO website.

If you wish to contact your authority's appointed external auditor please write to the address in paragraph 4 of the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return.



Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Woodnewton Parish Council				
Claire Tilley	Date of report:	18-04-2020		
31 March 2020	Date audit carried out			
	Claire Tilley	Claire Tilley Date of report:		

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. Managing the council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and management and not left for internal audit. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

I performed a virtual videoconferencing meeting with the Clerk & RFO, Amy Miller on the 16th April 2020. I would like to thank her for being so accommodating at this unusual time. Amy took over the role in September 2019, and it would appear she has made a valuable contribution to the council and its operation.

Prior to this, I had obtained minutes and polices from the Councils website, which is available and up to date. I am pleased to see that the website is now more accessible to the council.

I examined all the internal control objectives and am very pleased to say that the council has complied with all of them. As such, I am happy to sign off the Internal Audit Report form on the AGAR. I also note that due to the streetlight project, this has placed the council over the £25,000 income/expenditure threshold and triggers the submission of the AGAR for External Audit to PKF Litteljohn.

I have suggested that the Council adopt the 2019 Model Financial Regulations, as are currently working from a previous version. However, I am satisfied that Internal control measures are in place, but it would be better to minute these processes for greater transparency.

Ms Claire Tillo

Ms Claire Tilley Internal Auditor to the Council 01536 791893 claire@renaissancebusiness.co.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

Woodnewton Parish Council

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 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	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	V		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	V	716 95 74 70	
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	V		Company Ma
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	V		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	V		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			V
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.	V		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			
Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	V		
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.	v	20 (10 (10 (10 (10 (10 (10 (10 (10 (10 (1	
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")	v		
The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	~		
W. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No I	Vot applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed). Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

16/04/2020

Claire Tilley

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

16/04/2020

*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to 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).

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3 Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*

Page 3 of 6

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

Woodnewton Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020. that:

	Ag	reed		
	Yes	No*	'Yes'	means that this authority:
 We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. 	1		prepa	ared its accounting statements in accordance the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	1		made for sa its cha	proper arrangements and accepted responsibility feguarding the public money and resources in
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.	1		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.	
We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	1		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunit 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.	1		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.	
 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. 	1		arranged for a competent person, independent of the finance controls and procedures, to give an objective view on wheth internal controls meet the people of the controls.	
We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	1		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit	
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.	1		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.	
. (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	Yes	No	N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.			1	

^{*}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:

O4/05/2020

and recorded as minute reference:

MAY 2020 MINUTE II(b) PS 55-7

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)
Authority web address

www.woodnewtonhub.co.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

Woodnewton Parish Council

	Year	ending	Notes and guidance		
Balances brought	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures mu agree to underlying financial records.		
forward	10,326	13,62	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the years recorded in the financial records. Value		
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	13,568	14,38	Box 7 of previous year. Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.		
3. (+) Total other receipts	8,806		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 5. (-) Loan interest/capital	2,687	3,17	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf		
repayments	0	C	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest		
6. (-) All other payments 7. (=) Balances carried	16,390	26,636	Total expenditure and the		
forward	13,623	9,672	Total halances and man		
. Total value of cash and short term investments	13,623	9,672	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.		
Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	99,155	112,694	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.		
). Total borrowings	0	3,851	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).		
l. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		Yes No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets		
			N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.		

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 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 Forensible Financial Officer before being presented t

Date

04/05/2020

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

04/05/2020

as recorded in minute reference:

MAY 2020 MINUTE 11 (C) pg 557.

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were

Woodnewton Parish Council Bank Account Reconcilliation

Financial Year: 1st April 2019-31st March 2020

Position At: 31st March 2020

Balance at 1st April 2019 as per Bank Statement	£13,623.89
Available balance as at 1st April 2019 (Balance less unpresented cheques at 1st April 2019)	£13,623.89
Expenditure 1st April 2019 to 31sth March 2020 Receipts 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020	-£29,806.66 £25,854.49 -£3,952.17
Unpresented cheques at 31st March 2020	£52.60
Un-banked cheques at 31st March 2020 Un-banked cash at 31st March 2020	£0.00 £0.00
Balance at 31st March 2020 as per Bank Statement	£9,724.32
Available balance as at 31st March 2020 (Balance less unpresented cheques at 31st March 2020)	£9,671.72
CHECK Prepared by: Amy Miller(Clerk and RFO) Date 06th April 2020	£0.00

Explanation of variances - pro forma

County area (local councils and p

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all Blue highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);

- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

