

18 JUN 2015

# Local Councils in England

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Local councils in England with an annual turnover of £6.5 million or less must complete an annual return in accordance with proper practices summarising their activities at the end of each financial year. In this annual return the term 'local council' includes a Parish Meeting, a Parish Council and a Town Council.

The annual return on pages 2 to 5 is made up of four sections:

are completed by the person nominated by the local council.

is completed by the external auditor appointed by the Audit Commission.

is completed by the local council's internal audit provider.

Each council must approve this annual return no later than 30 June 2015.

Guidance notes, including a completion checklist, are provided on page 6 and at relevant points in the annual return.

Complete all sections highlighted in green. Do not leave any green box blank. Incomplete or incorrect returns require additional external audit work and may incur additional costs.

Send the annual return, together with your bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2015, an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements and any additional information requested, to your external auditor by the due date.

Your external auditor will identify and ask for any additional documents needed for their work. Therefore, unless requested, do not send any original financial records to the external auditor.

Once the auditor has completed their work, certified annual returns will be returned to the local council for publication or public display of sections 1, 2 and 3. You must publish or display the annual return, including the external auditor's report, by 30 September 2015.

It should not be necessary for you to contact the external auditor for guidance.

More guidance on completing this annual return is available in the Practitioners' Guide for local councils that can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.slcc.co.uk](http://www.slcc.co.uk)

# Section 1 – Accounting statements 2014/15 for

Enter name of  
reporting body here:

WITWIER PARISH COUNCIL

Council/Meeting

Readers should note that throughout this annual return references to a 'local council' or 'council' also relate to a parish meeting.

|  |            |   |
|--|------------|---|
| 1 Balances brought forward                                       | 1104 1990  | 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 (+) Annual precept   | 4750 4750  | Total amount of precept received or receivable in the year. Excludes any grants received.   |
| 3 (+) Total other receipts                                       | 1803 11606 | Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept received (line 2). Include any grants received here.  |
| 4 (-) Staff costs  | 1360 981   | Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses. |
| 5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments                           | NIL NIL    | Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any).  |
| 6 (-) All other payments   | 4307 12524 | Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).  |
| 7 (=) Balances carried forward                                   | 1990 4841  | Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)  |
| 8 Total cash and short term investments                          | 1990 4841  | The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March - <b>to agree with bank reconciliation.</b>                              |
| 9 Total fixed assets plus other long term investments and assets | 4305 4812  | The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the council as at 31 March   |
| 10 Total borrowings  | NIL NIL    | The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).  |
| 11 <b>Disclosure note</b> Trust funds (including charitable)     | No         | The council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust funds or assets.   |

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2015 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the council and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer

*Steele*

Date 06/05/2015.

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the council on this date:

06/05/2015.

and recorded as minute reference:

74/15.

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements

*Janet Shearer*

Date 06/05/2015

## Section 2 – Annual governance statement 2014/15

We acknowledge as the members of:

WITHER PARISH COUNCIL

Council/Meeting

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including 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 2015, that:

- |   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| 1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.  | YES | prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.   |
| 2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.  | YES | 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 the council to conduct its business or on its finances. | YES | 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.  | YES | during the year has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts.  |
| 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.  | YES | considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.  |
| 6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.   | YES | 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 the council. |
| 7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.   | YES | 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 the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.                               | YES | disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.                                |
| 9 Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.                        | N/A | has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.  |

This annual governance statement is approved by the council and recorded as minute reference

dated 74/15.  
06/05/2015.

Signed by:  
Chair Janet R Shearer  
dated 06/05/2015  
Signed by:  
Clerk R Pearce  
dated 06/05/2015.

\*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the council will address the weaknesses identified.

## Section 3 – External auditor certificate and report 2014/15

### Certificate

We certify that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Audit Commission Act 1998 as transitionally saved, for the year ended 31 March 2015 in respect of:

WITHEL PARISH COUNCIL

Council/Meeting

### Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

The body is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The body prepares an annual return in accordance with proper practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2015; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are important to our audit responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to review the annual return in accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission (see note below). Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

### External auditor report

~~(Except for the matters reported below)\*~~ on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no 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 council:

See attached

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

External auditor signature

External auditor name

Barrie Morris for Grant Thornton UK LLP

Date

6/8/15

Note: The Audit Commission issued guidance in its Standing Guidance, which is applicable to external auditors' work on 2014/15 accounts.

**This page is part of Section 3 - External auditor certificate and opinion 2014/15**

**Withiel Parish Council  
Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2015**

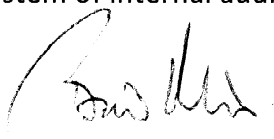
**Other matters not affecting our opinion which we wish to draw to the attention  
of Withiel Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2015**

**Timing of internal audit**

The council completed Section 2 of the Annual Return – the annual governance statement on 06 May 2015, and has responded "Yes" to assertion 6, confirming that the council has maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and control systems.

Section 4, the independent internal auditor's report was completed by the internal auditor on 15 June 2015, 40 days after the council gave a positive response to assertion 6 on Section 2 of the Annual Return.

If the council gives a positive response to assertion 6, before the independent internal auditor has completed their report at Section 4; the council must be able to explain on what basis it was appropriate to give a positive response to the assertion that it has maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and control systems.



**for Grant Thornton UK LLP**

**Date** 6/8/15

**Our ref CWL217**

## Section 4 – Annual internal audit report 2014/15 to

WITHEL PARISH COUNCIL

Council/Meeting

The council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2015.

Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the council'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 the council.

- |   |   |     |
|---|---|-----|
| A | Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year.   | ✓   |
| B | The council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.   | ✓   |
| C | The council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.   | ✓   |
| D | The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.   | ✓   |
| E | Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.  | ✓   |
| F | Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.   | N/A |
| G | Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.   | ✓   |
| H | Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.   | ✓   |
| I | Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.   | ✓   |
| 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, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded. | ✓   |
| K | Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.   |     |

N/A

For any other risk areas identified by the council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

Name of person who carried out the internal audit P. R. H. ROBERTS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit *PRH Roberts* Date 15/06/2015

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, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

# Guidance notes on completing the 2014/15 annual return

- 1 You must apply proper practices for preparing this annual return. Proper practices are found in the Practitioners' Guide\* which is updated from time to time and contains everything you should need to prepare successfully for your financial year-end and the subsequent audit. Both NALC and SLCC have helplines if you want to talk through any problem you encounter.
- 2 Make sure that your annual return is complete (i.e. no empty green boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making any amendments to the completed return. But, if this is unavoidable, make sure the amendments are drawn to the attention of and approved by the council, properly initialled and an explanation is provided to the external auditor. Annual returns containing unapproved or unexplained amendments will be returned unaudited and may incur additional costs.
- 3 Use the checklist provided below. Use a second pair of eyes, perhaps a council member or the Chair, to review your annual return for completeness before sending it to the external auditor.
- 4 Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically asked for. Doing so is not helpful. However, you must notify the external auditor of any change of Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer or Chair.
- 5 Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation which you send to your external auditor with the annual return covers all your bank accounts. If your council holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree your bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the Accounting Statements (Section 1). You must provide an explanation for any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the Practitioners' Guide\*.
- 6 Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on page 2. Do not just send in a copy of your detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete analysis to support your explanation. There are a number of examples provided in the Practitioners' Guide\* to assist you.
- 7 If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or you do not fully explain variances, this may incur additional costs for which the auditor will make a charge.
- 8 Make sure that your accounting statements add up and the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2014) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2015).
- 9 Do not complete section 3. The external auditor will complete it at the conclusion of the audit.

|                  |  |      |
|------------------|--|------|
| All sections     | All green boxes have been completed?   | YES  |
|                  | All information requested by the external auditor has been sent with this annual return? Please refer to your notice of audit.             | YES. |
|                  | Council approval confirmed by signature of Chair of meeting approving accounting statements?   | YES  |
| Section 1        | An explanation of significant variations from last year to this year is provided?  | YES  |
|                  | Bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2015 agreed to Box 8?   | YES  |
|                  | An explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 is provided?  | N/A  |
| Sections 1 and 2 | Trust funds – all disclosures made if council is a sole managing trustee?<br>NB: Do not send trust accounting statements unless requested. | N/A  |
| Section 2        | For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation is provided?   | N/A  |
| Section 4        | All green boxes completed by internal audit and explanations provided?   | YES  |

\*Note: Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in England – A Practitioners' Guide is available from your local NALC and SLCC representatives or from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or [www.slcc.co.uk](http://www.slcc.co.uk)

WITHIEL PARISH COUNCIL – CORNWALL (CWL217)

EXPLANATIONS OF SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES

| Box on section 1                              | 2014<br>£ | 2015 £ | Variance<br>Increase (+) or<br>decrease (-)<br>(2015 less 2014)<br>£ | % (Variance<br>divided by<br>2014 figure<br>multiplied by<br>100) | Explanation<br>required?<br>Less than<br>£250? - NO<br>Less than<br>15% - NO<br>More than<br>15% - YES |
|---|-----------|--------|--|---|--|
| Box 2<br>Annual Precept                       | 4750      | 4750   | NIL  | NIL   | NO   |
| Box 3<br>Total other receipts                 | 1803      | 11606  | (+) 9803   | 543.70%   | YES  |
| Box 4<br>Staff costs                          | 1360      | 981    | (-) 379  | 27.86%  | YES  |
| Box 5<br>Loan interest/ capital<br>repayments | NIL       | NIL    | NIL  | NIL   | NO   |
| Box 6<br>All other payments                   | 4307      | 12524  | (+) 8217   | 190.78%   | YES  |
| Box 9<br>Total fixed assets                   | 4305      | 4812   | (+) 507  | 11.78%  | NO   |



WITHIEL PARISH COUNCIL, CORNWALL (CWL217)

EXPLANATIONS OF SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES

| <b>BOX NO 3</b>                         | <b>£</b> |
|---|----------|
| Figure in 2014 column                   | 1803     |
| Figure in 2015 column                   | 11606    |
| Variance (2014 figure less 2015 figure) | 9803     |

| <b>Reasons (as many as are applicable)</b>                 | <b>Amount<br/>£</b>  |
|--|--|
| Reason 1   | Community Benefit Contribution of £10500 received February 2015 from undertaking pursuant to section 106 Town & Country Planning Act 1990. |
| Reason 2   | Community Development Fund Grant £474 received February 2015 in respect of Neighbourhood Development Plan.                                 |
| Reason 3   | VAT refund £410 received in 2014.<br>No refund received in 2015.   |
| Reason 4   | Local Maintenance Partnership payment decreased from £901 in 2014 to £265 in 2015.   |
| Unexplained  | 125  |
| Confirm unexplained amount is less than 15% of 2014 figure | CONFIRMED  |

WITHIEL PARISH COUNCIL CORNWALL (CWL217)

EXPLANATIONS OF SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES

| <b>BOX NO 4</b>                         | <b>£</b> |
|---|----------|
| Figure in 2014 column                   | 1360     |
| Figure in 2015 column                   | 981      |
| Variance (2014 figure less 2015 figure) | -379     |

| <b>Reasons (as many as are applicable)</b>                 | <b>Amount<br/>£</b>   |
|--|---|
| Reason 1   | New clerk appointed July 2014 and is drawing salary and expenses payments on 6 monthly basis and was paid until January 2015. The annual costs were thus reduced in the financial year by £379. |
| Reason 2   |   |
| Reason 3   |   |
| Reason 4   |   |
| Unexplained  | NIL   |
| Confirm unexplained amount is less than 15% of 2014 figure | CONFIRMED.  |

WITHIEL PARISH COUNCIL, CORNWALL (CWL217)

EXPLANATION OF SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES

| <b>BOX NO 6</b>                         | <b>£</b> |
|---|----------|
| Figure in 2014 column                   | 4307     |
| Figure in 2015 column                   | 12524    |
| Variance (2014 figure less 2015 figure) | 8217     |

| <b>Reasons (as many as are applicable)</b>                 | <b>Amount<br/>£</b>   |
|--|---|
| Reason 1   | Community Benefit Contribution of £10500 received in February 2015 from undertaking pursuant to section 106 Town & Country Planning Act 1990 was paid away in grants to community projects. |
| Reason 2   | In 2014 expenditure of £994 for elections was incurred and non recurring in 2015.   |
| Reason 3   | Year (2014) on year (2015) expenditure reduced on the following lines by the following amounts:<br>Training £231, Repairs and renewals £415 and Donations £400                              |
| Reason 4   |   |
| Unexplained  | 243   |
| Confirm unexplained amount is less than 15% of 2014 figure | CONFIRMED.  |