Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

SANDON PARISH COUNCIL

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, 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 2023/24 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 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 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 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 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 2022/23 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

28/05/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

John P Watson & Co

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date 28/05/2024

***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 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

SANDON 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 2024, that:

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

***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:

10/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

090624 (m)

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

Chair D Hyatt

Clerk

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

SANPON PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	58310	56566	*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	36960	38808	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	11337	9476	*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	7649	10355	*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	NIL	NIL	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	42392	33828	*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	56566	60667	*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	56566	60667	*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	53222	53579	*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	NIL	NIL	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		*The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.*
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	*The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 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

Date 10/06/24

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

10/06/24

as recorded in minute reference:

090624(n)

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

D Hyatt

Smaller authority name: **SANDON PARISH COUNCIL**

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

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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

NOTICE	NOTES
1. Date of announcement (a) 10th June 2024	(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below
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 2024, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:**	
(b) Ted Munt, Sandon Parish Clerk and RFO, Parish Office, Rectory Chase, Woodhill Road, Sandon. Tel 01245 477111 email: sandonparishclerk@gmail.com	(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
commencing on (c) **Monday 17 June 2024**	(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
and ending on (d) **Friday 26 July 2024**	(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July.
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-l.com)	
5. This announcement is made by (e) Ted Munt	(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority

Contact details

Name of smaller authority :SANDON PARISH COUNCIL

Please complete this form and send it back to us with the AGAR or exemption certificate

	Clerk/RFO (Main contact)	Chair
Name	TED MUNT	DEE HYATT
Address	9, WOODHAM DRIVE, HATFIELD PEVEREL, CHELMSFORD, CM3 277	PEARTREE LODGE, 2, THE OLD ORCHARD, HOWE GREEN, CM2 7TX
Daytime telephone number	01245 381135	01245 763744
Mobile telephone number	07847 459281	07821 885546
Email address	sandonparishclerk@gmail.com	cllrhyattsandonpc@gmail.com

```
GET /eSCL/ScannerStatus HTTP/1.1
Host: localhost
```

Bank reconciliation – pro forma

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. in the column headed "Year ending 31 March 20xx" in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where th prepared on a receipts and payments basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that unpresented entered as negative figures.

Name of smaller authority: SANDON PARISH COUNCIL

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): N/A

Financial year ending 31 March 2024

Prepared by (Name and Role): Edward Munt Parish Clerk & RFO

Date: 22/05/2024

		£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/24:			
	Barclays Current Account	257.0	
	Barclays Deposit Account	3,065.0	
	Nationwide Saver Account	57,345.0	
	account 4		
[add more accounts if necessary]	account 5		
	account 6		
	account 7		
	account 8		
			60,667.0
Petty cash float (if applicable)			-
Less: any unpresented cheques as at 31/3/xx **(enter these as negative numbers)**			
	item 1		
	item 2		
	item 3		
	item 4		
[add more lines if necessary]	item 5		
	item 6		
	item 7		
	item 8		
			-
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/xx			
			-
Net balances as at 31/3/24 (Box 8)			**60,667.0**

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: SANDON PARISH COUNCIL

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

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);
- New from 2020/21 onwards: variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;

	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	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	58,310	56,566				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	36,960	38,808	1,848	5.00%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	11,337	9,476	-1,861	16.42%	YES		We rec'd £1.2k more in bank interest (due to rate rises), £1.6k extra in CIL payments, but £0.6k less in VAT repayment, and rec'd no NDP funding (difference of £4.1k)
4 Staff Costs	7,649	10,355	2,706	35.38%	YES		In June, the clerk received an extra £3.63 per hour due to the position being upgraded to the correct level. Net pay increased by £1.5k, tax and pension contributions by £1.1k
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	42,392	33,828	-8,564	20.20%	YES		There were no green repairs (last year cost £13.8k). Maintenance costs increased by £1.0k. An extra £2.5k was spent on professional fees. The NDP costs were £3.8k higher. We had no Jubilee exps of £1.5k this year
7 Balances Carried Forward	56,566	60,667				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	56,566	60,667				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments a	53,222	53,579	357	0.67%	NO		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable