

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2022/23 Form 2

To be completed by smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2023, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015

There is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor, **provided** that the authority has certified itself as exempt at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2023 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2023** notifying the external auditor.

LOWCAPARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2022/23, the higher of the authority's total gross income for the year or total gross annual expenditure, for the year did not exceed **£25,000**

Total annual gross income for the authority 2022/23:

ENTER 10023.00

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2022/23:

ENTER 7210.00

There are certain circumstances in which an authority will be **unable to certify itself as exempt**, so that a limited assurance review will still be required. If an authority is **unable to confirm the statements below then it cannot certify itself as exempt** and it **must** submit the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return Form 3 to the external auditor to undertake a limited assurance review for which a fee of **£210 +VAT** will be payable.

By signing this **Certificate of Exemption** you are confirming that:

- The authority was in existence on 1st April 2019
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2021/22), the external auditor **has not**:
 - issued a public interest report in respect of the authority or any entity connected with it
 - made a statutory recommendation to the authority, relating to the authority or any entity connected with it
 - issued an advisory notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice
 - commenced judicial review proceedings under section 31(1) of the Act
 - made an application under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration
- The court has not declared an item of account unlawful after a person made an appeal under section 28(3) of the Act.

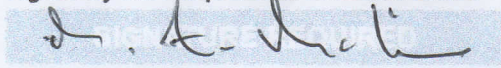
If the above statements apply and the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000, then the Certificate of Exemption can be signed and a copy submitted to the external auditor **either by email or by post** (not both).

The Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, an analysis of variances and the bank reconciliation plus the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 including the period for the exercise of public rights still need to be fully completed and, along with a copy of this certificate, published on the authority website/webpage* before 1 July 2023.

Signing this certificate confirms the authority will comply with the publication requirements.

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer

Date



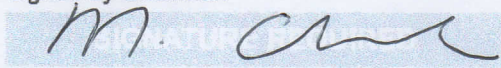
17/05/2023

I confirm that this Certificate of Exemption was approved by this authority on this date:

17/05/2023

Signed by Chairman

Date



17/05/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

154.02

Generic email address of Authority

Telephone number

ENTER lowcaparishclerk@gmail.com

01900 66040

*Published web address

ENTER www.lowcapc.org.uk

ONLY this Certificate of Exemption should be returned EITHER by email OR by post (not both) as soon as possible after certification to your external auditor, but no later than 30 June 2023. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

LOWCA PARISH COUNCIL

www.lowcapc.org.uk

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.	NO PETTY CASH		
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

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

15/10/2022 27/4/2023.

SIMONE MORGAN

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

S. Morgan

Date

27/4/2023.

*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:

LOWCA 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 2023, that:

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

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

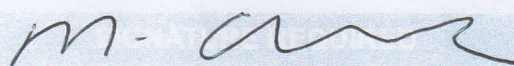
17/05/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

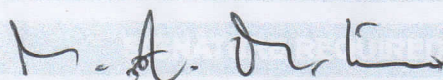
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Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman



Clerk



Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.

Yes No

www.lowcapc.org.uk

WEBSITE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

LOWCA PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	15446	17075	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	7725	7725	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	106	2298	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	2833	3210	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	3369	4000	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	17075	19888	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	17075	19888	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	27647	27647	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 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]
Date 16/05/2023

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

[Signature] 17/05/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

154.05.

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

[Signature]

Lowca bank reconciliation year end April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Opening balance	17075.55
Income	<u>10022.76</u>
Total	27098.31
Expenditure	<u>7210.43</u>
Balance 31/3/2021	19887.88

Balance as per bank statement 19887.88
375 31st March 2023

VARIANCE REPORT

Box No	Y/E 2022	Y/E 2023	
3	106	2298	Play area equip donation March 2023 Cllr K T grant app'.
4	2833	3210	In 2020/21 salary was £3039, in 2021/22 it was only £2833, back up to £3210 this year. This shows that I only charge for hours worked NOT a fixed monthly number of hours. Also hourly rate increased in October 2022.
6	3369	4000	A 10% increase would have taken it to £3705, however this year parish council have started paying an economic rent for hall hire £312 for the year, plus bank account charges imposed by HSBC inline with all UK banks on all charity and parish a/c's. They combined added £493 to expenses with additional print cost for Lowdown, therefore £4k not unexpected.
7	17075	19888	A £2k donation CCC obtained by Cllr K T

LOWCA PARISH COUNCIL ASSET VALUE REGISTER

End of financial year 2022/23, no changes from 2021/22

Footbridge situated between Parton and Lowca. Value established by external auditors 12th June 2012, £17,264.

War Memorial. Again, valued by external auditors as above but with a "proxy value" of just £1.

Playground equipment in two playground areas, based on insurance valuation for 2014/15 premium, £6492.

Parish Notice Board situated in East Road by bus stop. Installed in October 2014, supplied by Glasdon at a net value excluding VAT of £586.

3 Community Seats all given a proxy value of £1. A) Situated at top of Foundry Road on the boundary between Parton and Lowca. B) Situated in East Road by the junction with High Lowca. C) Situated on the pathway just past Sheep Wash before the first underpass.

Additional seat provided by Copeland BC located in Platinum garden.

Bus Shelter for East Road, £2000 and

War memorial fencing supplied by NuGen Apprentices FOC, but posts and galvanising of all materials have value of £850. £454 for Acer Aspire laptop and Epson printer.

Asset Value **£27647.00 confirmed prior to completion of Box 9 of accounting audit statement.**

M Milner

Lowca PC Clerk and RFO

25th April 2023.

Smaller authority name:

Lowca Parish Council

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

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

**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 <u>Sunday 25th June 2023</u> (a) 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 2023, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to: (b) <u>[Signature]</u> <u>lowcaparishclerk@gmail.com</u> commencing on (c) <u>Friday 30th June 2023</u> and ending on (d) <u>Friday 26th July 2023</u> [the 30th working day after (b) above] 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: MOORE Moore (Ref AP/HD) Rutland House Minerva Business Park Lynch Wood Peterborough PE2 6PZ 5. This announcement is made by (e) <u>Mike Milner clerk and RFO</u>	(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 extends for a single period of 30 working days (inclusive) ending on the date appointed in (d) below (d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must also include the first 10 working days of July. (e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority