

## HICKLING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 in the Village Hall commencing at 7.00pm.

Councillors present: Lamb, Rowe and Playle (Chair).

Also in attendance: 4 parishioners, Cllr. John Cottee (NCC) and Cllr. Tina Combellack (RBC).

**15. Declaration of acceptance of office by Cllr Playle. Cllr Playle signed the acceptance of the office form, this was witnessed the Clerk.**

Cllr Playle reiterated that at the meeting a parishioner asked that the chairman advises at the start of the meeting if it would be a collaborative meeting or a formal meeting, Cllr Playle asked that all parishioners who wished to talk once the meeting is formally opened, to raise their hand and he will invite them to talk.

**16. Apologies:** Cllr's Green and Prosser.

**17. Declarations of Interest:** None

**18. Minutes of meeting**

It was proposed by Cllr Rowe that the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> May were taken as a true record this was seconded by Cllr Playle and agreed by all.

**19. Open session**

Parishioner reported that the pavement by Walkers' Green is damaged, as it looks like a heavy vehicle has gone over it, as parishioner does not have the What3Word app the clerk will report this.

Parishioner said that there is a cardboard cutout of a policeman at Stanford on the Wolds, and it is effective as it makes you slow down, and wondered if it was possible to have one for the village. Clerk advised that Kinoulton also has one, however, this was not arranged by the PC.

**Action Point: Clerk to report damaged pavement by Walkers' Green.**

**Open session closed at 7.20pm.**

**20. Planning Matters.**

**Reference Number: 23/00595/FUL**

**Development:** Erection of new two storey dwelling. Associated landscaping and access works.

**Location:** Willow House, Melton Road, Hickling Pastures, Nottinghamshire. LE14 3QG

**DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS IS 21<sup>st</sup> JUNE – TO BE ON THE PLANNING PORTAL**

All councillors at the meeting unanimously agreed to object to this application, on the grounds that it contravenes the Neighbourhood Plan Policy H10.

**Action Point: Clerk to submit objection on the planning portal before 21.06.23, response to be drafted and circulate it to Cllrs Playle, Lamb and Rowe for authorisation prior to submitting it.**

**Hickling Parish Council wishes to object to the above application, it contravenes the Policy H10 Housing provision in the Hickling Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2028, which was adopted 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

**If you wish to see the Neighbourhood plan please visit <https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planning-growth/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/#Hickling>**

Policy H10: Housing Provision

Housing development within the Hickling Limits to Development, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported.

Outside the Hickling Limits to Development, permission for housing development will be limited to:

A. The development of previously used (brownfield) land that is well-related to the settlement of Hickling Pastures, in principle, having regard to the other policies in the neighbourhood plan;

B. The re-use and adaptation of redundant rural buildings in accordance with Policy H12 (Residential Conversion of Rural Buildings);

C. The subdivision of an existing dwelling;

D. A dwelling that, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, is of exceptional design quality, in that it

i. is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and

ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area;

E. Replacement dwellings in accordance with Policy H13 (Replacement Dwellings);

F. Rural worker accommodation in accordance with Policy H17 (Rural Worker Accommodation); and

G. Rural exception site development where need has been demonstrated through an up-to-date housing needs survey.

As you can see a replacement dwelling would be acceptable, but a new, additional dwelling contravenes the plan, therefore, Hickling Parish Council object to this application.

## 21. **Decision Notices**

**Reference No:** 23/00599/FUL

**Development:** Proposed two storey front and side extension and single storey rear extension, extend existing raised rear patio. Existing roof to be replaced and ridge height raised includes 4no.front dormers. Alteration to existing eaves. Alteration of existing front box dormers to ridged dormers. Existing side extension to be demolished. Application of cedar cladding and render. Air source unit to side elevation.

**Location:** Quorn House, Folly Hall Lane, Hickling Pastures, Nottinghamshire, LE14 3QB

**Decision:** REFUSE PERMISSION

### **TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990,**

#### **Section 211, Notice of Proposed works to Trees in Hickling Conservation Area.**

Fell Lime at the front of Hickling Churchyard due to 3 cavities.

With reference to your notification dated 24.05.23, the Borough Council does not propose to make a Tree Preservation Order in this instance and the proposed work may proceed.

We note that your client does not own the tree, the Church's permission will be required prior to work commencing. Given the prominent nature of the tree the Council would expect a replacement Lime to be planted within the Churchyard.

Cllr Playle has contacted the Senior Design and Landscape Officer Property

Services, at RBC with regards to application, he was advised that a neighbour had put in the application to have the tree removed, an Arborist has submitted a report, which states that the tree has three cavities, the contact at RBC has suggested that Hickling PC put in Tree Preservation Orders for trees in the village that the PC feels are valuable. Cllr Playle suggested that the PC contact the village tree warden to see if he would be interested in mapping the trees that are felt to be important to the village, and how much this work would cost if it was approved by the PC.

A parishioner asked Cllr Cottee about a Cherry Tree that is on the land in front of her house, Cllr Cottee said that he will look into this for the parishioner.

#### **Action Points:**

**Cllr Cottee to advise parishioner re the Cherry Tree at the front of her house.**

**Cllr Playle to draft a letter to the church with regards to recommending that the Church replaces the Fell Lime, Cllr Playle will supply information to the Clerk to do a letter from the PC.**

**Cllr Playle to contact the Tree Warden to enquire if he would be interested in mapping all the important trees in the village, in view of submitting Tree Preservation orders, this quote to be discussed at a further meeting.**

## 22. Portfolio Group Reports.

### Finance and Administration – Cllr Prosser

## 23. Annual Internal Auditor Report 2023 is received and noted.

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The duties of internal audit relate to reporting on the adequacy and effectiveness of an authority's system of internal control. The minimum reporting requirement for internal audit to the smaller authority is met by completing the annual internal audit of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

The Accounts and minutes have been reviewed by the Internal Auditor and these are his comments:

### Internal Examination Comments

- 1) Would you please box 11a on page 6 as 'no'. The remainder of the form will also need completing. **Now complete.**
- 2) With regard to the pending VAT claim this should not be included in the year as the receipt will be in 2023/24. **Auditor agreed that figure can remain included this year but noted for next year.**
- 3) Again, would you please confirm that the Fixed Assets schedule is correct with no additions or removals. A full Fixed Assets Register needs to be included in the paperwork and, as this not the first time this has been requested, a note will be made on next year's Return if there is still noncompliance. **Please see updated document below.**
- 4) Would you please confirm that all Statutory Documents are being reviewed on a regular basis. It would also be advisable that the document is signed and dated at the meeting and that copy should also be kept in a secure place. **Agenda item for today's meeting is to sign and date the code of conduct document that was approved at March's meeting.**
- 5) Would you please confirm that Councillors do not use private email addresses for Council business. **This item to be discussed.** (Cllr Lamb said that this will be resolved when the new website is up and running, approx. 2 months).

Description	Item	Cost or Value	Value 2013	Value 2014	Value 2015	Value 2016	Value 2017	Value 2018	Value 2019	Value 2020	Value 2021	Value 2022	Value 2023
<b>Street Furniture</b>													
	2 x Public Seats	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200
<b>Community Assets</b>													
	3 x Defibrillator			£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775	£1,775
	Notice Board.			£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	Telephone Kiosk			£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1
	Walkers' Green				£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1
<b>Playground</b>													
	Swing, see-saw, boulders				£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	2 x Bench			£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	No dog signs						£6	£6	£6	£6	£6	£6	£6
	Public bin			£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Electronic Equipment</b>													
	Laptop Computer						£317	£317	£317	£317	£317	£317	£317
	printer							£56	£56	£56	£56	£56	£56
<b>Nominal Value</b>													
	Cemetery	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1	£1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	£200	£201	£1,977	£1,978	£1,978	£2,301	£2,357	£2,357	£2,357	£2,357	£2,357	£2,357

During the year the following assets were purchased for the cost shown: None.

**24. Annual Governance Statement 2022/23, to approve the Parish Council's Governance Statement for 2022/23.**

Hickling Parish Council is responsible for ensuring its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.

It is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council is required to approve an Annual Governance statement prepared in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control. This forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) with the Council setting out that it agrees "Yes" or "No" with the Assertions set out in the Report. The proposed response to the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 is set out below.

## Guidance notes on completing Form 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23, Sections 1 and 2

- An authority that wishes to declare itself exempt from the requirement for a limited assurance review must do so at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2023. It should not submit its Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor. However, as part of a more proportionate regime, the authority **must** comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- The Certificate of Exemption must be returned to the external auditor no later than **30 June 2023**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT for each letter.
- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR and the Certificate of Exemption. Proper Practices are found in the *Practitioners' Guide*\* which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness at the meeting at which it is signed off.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- The authority must publish numerical and narrative explanations for significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 6**. Guidance is provided in the *Practitioners' Guide*\* which may assist.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2022) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2023).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish, on the authority website/webpage, the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2023**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Have the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights been published?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation available for publication?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at <b>31 March 2023</b> been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Is an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 available, should a question be raised by a local elector and/or an interested party?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? ( <i>Local Councils only</i> )	✓	

\* *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

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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	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
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.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
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.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>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.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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
			✓

\*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:

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

and recorded as minute reference:

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

## **25. Accounting Statements (section 2) are approved.**

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require all authorities to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in accordance with proper practices.

For the Parish Council, the statement of accounts may take the form of a summary receipts and payments account. The Parish Council's records are maintained on a receipts and payments basis and are balanced at the year end to produce a reconciled Receipt and Payment Account.

### **Requirements for the Year End**

The Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) was formally appointed in January 2016 as the 'person specified to appoint local auditors' under powers set out in Regulation 3 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015. PKF Littlejohn LLP have been appointed to all relevant smaller authorities in specific areas, including Nottinghamshire.

Each smaller authority is required by law:

- to prepare Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 in the form required by proper practices (the relevant annual return, now known as the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 1, 2 or 3)
- to approve and publish the AGAR including the Accounting Statements;
- to provide for the exercise of public rights;

For the Parish Council the AGAR 2022/23 Form 2 has to be completed, approved and published by exempt authorities with financial transactions during the year.

Although the Regulations do not specify a date by which the annual internal audit report (AIAR) must be completed, the review of effectiveness of the system of internal control by the smaller authority and the completion and approval of the Annual Governance Statement will both need to consider the system of internal audit that has been in place during the year under review. Thus, the smaller authority will need to consider the internal audit work performed and internal audit arrangements in place between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 before confirming compliance with assertions 2 and 6.

The Parish Council is required to publish:

- the Annual Internal Audit Report;
- the Annual Governance Statement;
- the Accounting Statements;
- A copy of the Certificate of Exemption;
- Details of the arrangements for the exercise of public rights; and
- The name and address of the External Auditor.

### **Transparency Code**

Under the provisions of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 the Government has issued a code of recommended practice (Transparency Code) for small parish councils with a turnover not exceeding £25,000. The Transparency Code replaces the need for external audit for parish councils with turnover less than £25,000. The Code requires the on-line publication of the following information in relation to the year end accounts:

- a. all items of expenditure above £100;
- b. end of year accounts;
- c. annual governance statement;
- d. internal audit report;
- e. list of councillor or member responsibilities;
- f. the details of public land and building assets;

The accounts and other information required will have to be on a website on or before 1st July.

### AGAR Certificate of Exemption

The Parish Council qualifies to sign the Certificate of Exemptions. Therefore, the Parish Council is requirement to complete and approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), and provide for public rights. However, this means there is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor.

### Accounting Statements

The following Accounts and Financial Statements are set out within the Report:

- AGAR Section 2 - Accounting Statement 2022/23 sets out the Parish Council's accounts in the format that it is necessary to submit to publish. (Appendix One)
- Receipts and Payments Account for the year ending 31st March 2023 over £100.

### Receipts and Payments

Receipts for the year were £11,450 and payments £15,148, Precept received was £8,740, Grants from RBC/NCC £1,150.

Several grants have been paid by the Parish Council during the financial year, £1,000 to St. Luke's church towards the cost of the roof alarm, £150 to The Hickling Standard, £150 to Hickling History Group and £200 to the WI.

The Council has several items of expenditure which occur every year. This includes the Clerk wages, insurance, audit, defibrillator pads and electrodes and maintenance costs in relation to the Cemetery and Walkers' Green. Every organisation or sole trader who processes personal information needs to pay a data protection fee to the Information Commissioner's Office and this include the Parish Council with an annual cost of £40.00.

The following items of payment have been made above £100.00:

Date	Purpose of expenditure	Net amount	VAT	Recoverable Yes/No	Total
April	Black poplar tree for churchyard	£178.80	N/A	N/A	£178.80
May	Zurich Insurance	£408.24	N/A	N/A	£408.24
May	St. Luke's' Church	£1,000.00	N/A	N/A	£1,000.00
May	Jubilee	£450.44	£28.29	Yes	£478.73
June	Hickling History Group	£150.00	N/A	N/A	£150.00
July	Hickling WI	£200.00	N/A	N/A	£200.00
Sept	Fairfield Services – removal of trees / ivy at Cemetery	£177.50	N/A	N/A	£177.50
Nov	Fairfield Services Refurbishment of 6 benches-sanding/preserving	£195.00	N/A	N/A	£195.00
Nov	Fairfield Services Repair of 2 benches	£156.08	N/A	N/A	£156.08
Dec	Website	£929.00	£185.80	Yes	£1,114.80
Jan	Richard Salt - Cemetery/Walkers' Green	£2,305.00	N/A	N/A	£2,305.00



Jan	Defibrillator pads/electrodes	£622.00	£124.40	Yes	746.40
Feb	Hickling Standard	£150.00	N/A	N/A	£150.00

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council:

- Approves the AGAR Accounting Statement 2022/23 set out below, authorising the Chairperson of the meeting to sign the Statement.
- Approves the annual accounts authorising the Chairperson of the meeting and the Responsible Financial Officer (Clerk) to sign the accounts.

Appendix 1.

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

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	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	15509	13127	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	8134	8740	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	2698	2711	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	5412	5882	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	7802	9267	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	13127	9429	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	13127	9429	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 long term investments and assets	2357	2357	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).
<b>For Local Councils Only</b>	Yes	No	N/A
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓	
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓

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**

Date

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

as recorded in minute reference:

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

Proposed by Cllr. Playle and agreed by Cllrs Lamb and Rowe:

- a) Approve the AGAR Section 2 Accounting Statement 2022/23, authorising the Chairman of the meeting to sign the Statement.
- b) Approve the annual accounts year end accounts authorising the Chairman of the meeting and the Responsible Financial Officer (Clerk) to sign the accounts.

## **26. Certificate of Exemption AGAR 2022/23 Part 2 – To approve the certificate of exemption 2022/23.**

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require all authorities to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in accordance with proper practices.

### **AGAR Certificate of Exemption**

Exempt authorities must meet a number of specified criteria and provided those criteria are satisfied, they only need submit a copy of their exemption certificate to the auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP. The exemption criteria are met if the smaller authority can declare that it has:

- Total gross income and total gross expenditure below £25,000 and
- no public interest report/statutory recommendation/advisory notice/judicial review/application to court re unlawful item of account issued by its external auditor in the prior year; and
- been in existence since before 1st April 2014.

The Parish Council meets all three aspects, as such there is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor. However, a Certificate of Exemption must be sent to the appointed auditor otherwise they will presume the authority does not meet the qualifying criteria and is not exempt.

The submission deadline for the receipt by the External Auditor of the Certificate of Exemption is 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2023.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Council authorises:

Cllr. Lamb proposed that:

- a) Authorises the Chairman of the meeting and Responsible Financial Officer to sign the Certificate of Exemption –AGAR 2022/23 Form 2.
- b) The Responsible Financial Officer to forward the signed Certificate of Exemption to the Auditor.
- c) Authorise the Responsible Financial Officer, on behalf of the authority, to set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days, which includes the first ten working days of July.

Agreed by Cllrs' Rowe and Playle.

Appendix 2 overleaf:

## 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.

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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:

11,450

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2022/23:

15,148

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

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

Signed by Chairman      Date

as recorded in minute reference:

Generic email address of Authority

Telephone number

\*Published web address

**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.**

**27.Assets of Community Value** – update via email from Cllr Prosser, this has been agreed by the parishioner who is on the group, Cllr Lamb and Cllr Prosser, this was then circulated to the members of the Parish Councillors who via email have now agreed unanimously to it being submitted to Nicola Wells at Rushcliffe Borough Council, the information has been circulated to Cllr Cottee and Cllr Combellack for comments, once their agreement / or comments have been received the Clerk will either submit the application to RBC or feedback the County and Borough Councillors comments.

**Action Point: If Clerk receives agreement from County and Borough Cllr's this will be submitted to RBC or back to the ACV group with their comments.**

**28.Conservation Area Appraisal** – update via email from Cllr Prosser, together with a parishioner Cllr Prosser they are now on draft no. 4 - they met again with Andrew Langley (RBC) after the submission of draft no. 3 and there were lots of areas that they needed to work through again and reconsider.

**29.Parish Council 2 x vacancies** – possible co-option, Chairman asked if any parishioners attending would like to consider joining the Parish Council, this was declined.

### **Environment – Cllr Green & Playle**

#### **30.Canal Reed Clearance**

Update from Cllr Playle, there was evidence that nutrient pollution is having a negative impact on water quality, ecology and wildlife along the whole of the Hickling stretch.

No water is getting through from Denton or Knipton reservoirs. There is a concrete bund across the canal at bridge 37 which under current conditions is preventing any flow from the east.

As of 29th May the River Smite is completely dried up after a very wet March and April!

**Action Point: Cllr Playle to advise Clerk when he would like Canal back on the agenda.**

#### **31. Draft Noise Action Plan covers the period from 2024 to 2028 – East Midlands Airport**

Parish Councillors have read the circulated associated paper and no comment from HPC.

### **Highways and Street Furniture – Cllr Rowe**

#### **32. Noticeboard relocation to Hickling Pastures.**

Cllr Rowe received communication from Via East Midlands Ltd to advise that they need to do a utilities search and obtain authorisation re trimming the hedges where the notice board will be located.

**Action Point: Clerk to email ex councillor with regards to obtaining a copy of the quote that had been submitted whilst he was on the PC.**

**33. Air Ambulance/Heliport** – Cllr Rowe updated the PC. A further meeting took place in April after further complaints due to multiple flights on the 16<sup>th</sup> April. The air ambulance manger agreed to speak to his team, however, the representative for the Heliport refused to acknowledge any issues and have said that in future they will liaise with the Planning Enforcement Officer at Rushcliffe Borough Council and not the Parish Council. Cllr Rowe asked the approval of the PC members to continue to liaise with the Planning Enforcement Officer at RBC, this was agreed by the other attendees. Cllr Rowe to advise the Clerk if he wishes this item to be on the agenda going forward.

**Action Point: Cllr Rowe to advise the Clerk if he wishes the Air Ambulance/Heliport to be put on the agenda.**

#### **34. Community Speed Watch – deferred from February's meeting, re correspondence received from Upper Broughton, does the Parish Council wish to invest in equipment with UB–**

1 x Bushnell Velocity Speed Gun	Approx. £195
1 x Calibration tuning fork	Approx. £35
2 x Portable warning signs	Approx. £150
1 x handheld traffic counter (e.g., traffic counter x 4 from Amazon)	Approx. £12
3 x Cat 2 long sleeved high viz jackets with CSW logos	Approx. £50
1 x Document folder with scheme paperwork and risk assessment.	

The Parish Councillors discussed the possibility of setting up a Community Speed Watch group, it was decided if the parishioners wished to volunteer and run this, it could then be discussed at a future meeting whether the PC would like to part pay for the equipment with Upper Broughton. It was decided that a notice should go in the Standard and if parishioners were concerned about speeding for them to volunteer to run this for the village.  
**Action Point: Clerk to draft a notice for the Standard.**

#### **Assets – Cllr Prosser**

**35. Cemetery** – Cllr Playle has advised the contractor re size of the boulders for the unconsecrated area, cost to be confirmed.

#### **36. Annual Risk Assessment**

Cllr Prosser and Clerk to do parish assets risk assessment end of July (due to holidays) and end of Nov.

**Action Point: clerk to put Risk Assessment on agenda for July.**

**37. Walkers' Green Annual inspection** –As requested by the Parish Council, the Clerk obtained confirmation from Zurich, the Insurance company that the PC could now carry out the inspection monthly rather than weekly. Cllr Green has carried out the monthly inspection for June, and also hammered in the top metal plates on the gateposts and sawn off the protruding bolts. Cllr Lamb has volunteered to do the inspection for July

**Action Point: Cllr Lamb asked for a walkaround sheet, Clerk to supply.**

#### **38. Website**

It was agreed that Cllr Lamb would take over this Asset from Cllr Green, it is estimated that it will be up and running in approximately 2/3 months, Cllr Lamb to advise the Clerk when it needs to appear on the agenda.

**Action Point: Cllr Lamb advise the Clerk when the Website need to be put on the agenda.**

Cllr Cottee apologised that he needed to leave the meeting at 20.30. He asked if he could give his summary prior to leaving. His grant fund has been cut to £3,000, as he has 10 parishes that will be £300 per parish, if the PC could advise what they would like the monies for and put in an application. He had hoped to have an update for the meeting with regards to the re-surfacing of Melton Road, however, that had not been received, any updates will be passed to the Clerk.

#### **Community Engagement – Cllr Green**

**39. Coronation** – possible tree Cllr Playle has not managed to obtain a quote yet. This will carry over to July's meeting.

**Action Point: Clerk to put Coronation – possible tree on agenda for July's meeting.**

#### **40. Ward members reports.**

Cllr Combellack advised that the RCVSG (Rushcliffe South Villages – Community Safety Group) meeting had taken place, and priorities are rural crime and speeding. CCTV trial had been set up in Cropwell Bishop, to help us all to keep safe.

Cllr Combellack suggested that a community noticeboard for Hickling was purchased, and could possibility use the grant that has been received for the Coronation. She felt that the village needed a notice board that they could put up information on.

#### **41. Correspondence.**

None.

#### **42. Finance**

A) Balance of accounts: received June

Current Account      £15,695.23

Reserve Account      £3,835.35

B) Payments due:

<b>Bacs Transfer</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
	Julie Holland	Working from home expenses 01.04.2023 - 30.04.2023	£26.00
	D A Dixon	Annual Internal Audit report	£50.00
	Julie Holland	Postage to NG2 7YG, BX9 1JZ (HMRC), 2 x second class stamps and 1 x first class stamp.	£6.85 £2.65
	Julie Holland	Working from home expenses 01.05.2023 – 31.05.2023	£26.00
	Julie Holland	Clerk's salary 01.05.23 – 31.05.23	Addendum
	HMRC	Employees income tax For period of 01.05.2023 – 31.05.2023	£71.37
	Julie Holland	Ink cartridge Epson 603XL multi pack	£33.99
<b>MONIES RECEIVED</b>			
446689	Rushcliffe Borough Council	Coronation Grant	£250.00

**43. Items from members for the next agenda.**

As above action points, Cllr Rowe will be chairman.

**44. Date of next meeting,** 25<sup>th</sup> July.

2023 Meetings, 29<sup>th</sup> Aug, 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct, 14<sup>th</sup> Nov, 19<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**No further business – meeting closed at 8.35pm.**

