Cromhall Parish Council

Audit documentation 2023/24

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Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

CROMHALL 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	No*		'Yes' means that this authority:
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:

25/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

2024/06/10.2

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

Chair

Signed copy held by the Clerk

Clerk

www.cromhallpc.org.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

CROMHALL 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	39,660	51,379	*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	22,330	23,941	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	19,875	3,863	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	5,648	5,046	*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	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	24,838	15,460	*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	51,379	58,677	*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	51,380	58,677	*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	23,441	25,686	*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	0	0	*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

Signature redacted

Date 11/06/2024

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

25/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

2024/06/10.3

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

Signature redacted

Signed copy held by the Clerk

Cromhall Parish Council has resolved to answer NO to assertions 4 and 5 of the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24.

Assertion 4 (public rights) – during 2023/24 this authority failed to make proper provision because the period did not include the first ten working days of July. This is because there was a very new and inexperienced clerk in post during the audit period who did not fully understand the requirements. He subsequently left the role in July and an experienced clerk is now in post, so the authority is confident that proper provision will be made for this and future years.

Assertion 5 (assessment of risks facing the authority) – due to the extended period of time with no experienced clerk in post, from December 2022 until November 2023, the usual annual review of the risk management system did not take place. Unfortunately, this was not picked up by the new Clerk during the financial year. Regular internal control checks were properly carried out during the year and adequate insurance cover was held. However the authority felt that, because no formal risk management review had taken place during the year under audit, they must answer No to this assertion. As above, with an experienced Clerk now in post, the authority is confident that proper review will take place during the current financial year.

Variances 2023-24

	Year ending				Explanation required
	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	Variance £	Variance %	
1. Balances brought forward	39,660	51,379			
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	22,330	23,941	1611	7%	No explanation required
3. (+) Total other receipts	19,875	3,863	-16012	-81%	See below - Box 3
4. (-) Staff costs	5,648	5,046	-602	-11%	No explanation required
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-	-	0	0%	No explanation required
6. (-) All other payments	24,838	15,460	-9378	-38%	See below - Box 6
7. (=) Balances carried forward	51,379	58,677			See Reserves sheet
	Bal c/f checker	Bal c/f checker			
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	51,380	58,677			
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	23,441	25,686	2245	10%	No explanation required
10. Total borrowings	-	-	0	0%	No explanation required

Explanation of variances - Box 3 (Other Receipts)

2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Difference	Explanation (Ensure each explanation is quantified)
15690	*350*	*-15340*	*Community Infrastructure Levy receipts*
	Remaining difference	*-672*	
	as %	*-3.4%*	

Explanation of variances - Box 6 (Other Payments)

2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Difference	Explanation (Ensure each explanation is quantified)
9303	*0*	*-9303*	*Purchase of new play equipment for playground*
	Remaining difference	*-75*	
	as %	*-0.3%*	

Reserve	Balance at 1/4/2023	In-year additions to reserve	Payments from reserve	Balance at 31/3/2024
CIL	£ 10,175.99	£ 349.94	£ -	£ 10,525.93
Elections	£ 2,000.00	£ -	£ 175.00	£ 1,825.00
Legal & professional services	£ -	£ 230.00	£ -	£ 230.00
Open spaces	£ 8,500.00	£ 1,931.00	£ -	£ 10,431.00
Play area	£ 17,344.60	£ 500.00	£ -	£ 17,844.60
Trees	£ 3,000.00	£ 1,050.00	£ -	£ 4,050.00
Grants received	£ 1,500.00	£ -	£ 1,500.00	£ -
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	**£ 42,520.59**			**£ 44,906.53**

Reconciled net balances at 31/03/2024	£ 58,677.08
GENERAL RESERVES	**£ 13,770.55**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

CROMHALL PARISH COUNCIL

https://cromhallpc.org.uk

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).*		✓	

	Yes	No	Not applicable
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

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: 08/05/2024 | 29/05/2024 | DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: James Carpenter

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: J Carpenter

Date: 29/05/2024

***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).