

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

LOWER BEEDING 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 2022, 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:

14/06/22

and recorded as minute reference:

08/22

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

Chairman



Clerk



www.lowerbeeding.com

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

LOWER BEEDING PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance	
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £		
1. Balances brought forward	30,389	39,117	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	37,010	37,240	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,496	3,199	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	16,267	17,524	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	∅	∅	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).	
6. (-) All other payments	13,511	16,757	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	39,117	45,275	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	39,117	45,275	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	47,919	47,919	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	∅	∅	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	N/A	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
			✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 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

20/06/2022

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

14/06/22

as recorded in minute reference:

079/22

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



Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **Lower Beeding Parish Council**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a limited assurance review is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is not a full statutory audit, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with Proper Practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor report 2021/22

Except for the matters reported below on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights does not include the first ten working days of July as specified in the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Part 15 (1).

The Public Rights period is required by the Audit and Accounts Regulations to be started as soon as practicable after the date the AGAR has been approved but the Council waited a period of 5 weeks from approval before these were made available for public review.

We reported in the prior year in relation to the Notice of Public Rights not being properly raised. As the Notice of Public Rights for the 2021 year end was during the 2022 financial year, the Council should have answered 'No' to assertion 4 on Section 1 of the AGAR. As further public rights breaches have taken place in 2022 the Council should also have answered 'No' to assertion 7 of Section 1.

Section 12 of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 requires the RFO to complete Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return prior to passing it to the Council for its approval. This year, the Council approved the Return before the RFO which is a breach of this regulation. In future the Council should ensure the form is duly completed prior to it considering it for approval.

Section 1 of the AGAR was completed as approved on 14/06/2022 with a minute reference 08/22. Section 2 of the AGAR was dated on the same day and had the minute reference 079/22. On investigation (due to the big difference in minute references used), the minutes found on the Parish Council's website clearly show both Sections 1 and 2 were approved at the Parish Meeting held on 14 June 2022 and recorded as minute items 078/22 and 080/22 respectively.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The Council's name was not entered on Section 2 of the Annual Return on the initial submission. We consider the omission to be trivial, however, the Parish Council should take care to ensure the form is fully completed in the future to ensure full compliance with the regulations and code of practice. The form was later amended and resubmitted to us with this being completed.

The Internal Auditor has answered 'Yes' to Box M of their report despite the council not satisfying the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 in multiple regards to the notice of public rights period during the 2021-22 which required a period of 30 working days but was set for a period of 30 calendar days and for a period to include the first ten working days of July but this was not the case. We would therefore have anticipated this response to have been 'No'.

3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

External Auditor Name

 **MOORE**

External Auditor Signature



Date

11/09/2022