

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2023/24 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 2024, 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 2024 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2024** notifying the external auditor.

Stetchworth Parish Council

certifies that during the financial year 2023/24, 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 2023/24: £19,956 R AMOUNT £00,000

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2023/24: £19,716 R AMOUNT £00,000

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 2020
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2022/23), 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notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice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under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration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 2024.

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

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date

SIGNATURE REDACTED

14/05/2024

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

14/05/2024

Signed by Chair

Date

SIGNATURE REDACTED

14/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

140524/10 (d) MINUTE REFERENCE

Generic email address of Authority

clerk@stetchworth.org AUTHORITY OWNED GENERIC EMAIL ADDRESS

Telephone number

07527705839 NUMBER

*Published web address

ENTER PUBLIC WEBSITE ADDRESS www.stetchworth.org ENTER WEBSITE 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 2024. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Stetchworth Parish Council

ENTER PUBLIC WEBSITE OR WWW WEBSITE WEBSITE ADDRESS
www.stetchworth.org

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. (<i>If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered"</i>)	✓		
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 (<i>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</i>).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (<i>see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes</i>).	✓		
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

06/04/2024

07/04/2024

DD/MM/YYYY

John Alexander ACMA GCMA AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

REACTED

Date

07/04/2024

*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:

Stetchworth 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
			✓

*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:

14/05/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

140524/10 (d)

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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
	✓	

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS www.stetchworth.org

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

Stetchworth Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
			<i>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.</i>
1. Balances brought forward	33,082	32,582	<i>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.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	18,500	18,870	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,214	1,086	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	4,379	5,232	<i>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.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	15,835	14,484	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	32,582	32,822	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	32,582	32,822	<i>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.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	937,243	937,243	<i>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.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

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

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 REQUIRED

Date 14/05/2024

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

14/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

140524/10 (e)

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Bank reconciliation – pro forma

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It **must** column headed "Year ending 31 March 2024" in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are and payments basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that unpresented cheques should be entered as

Name of smaller authority: Stetchworth Parish Council

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Financial year ending 31 March 2024

Prepared by (Name and Role): Karen Peck - Clerk and RFO

Date: 01/04/2024

	£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/24:		
Unity Trust Current	25,919.0	
Unity Trust Deposit	6,878.0	
		32,797.0
Petty cash float (if applicable)		25.0
Less: any unpresented cheques as at 31/3/24 (enter these as negative numbers)		-
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/24		-
Net balances as at 31/3/24 (Box 8)		32,822.0

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of emitter authority: **Stetchworth 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	33,082	32,582				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	18,500	18,870	370	2.00%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	1,214	1,086	-128	10.54%	NO		
4 Staff Costs	4,379	5,232	853	19.48%	YES	Staffing costs £853 (pay increment, lac and NI)	
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	15,835	14,484	-1,351	8.53%	NO		
7 Balances Carried Forward	32,582	32,822				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	32,582	32,822				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	937,243	937,243	0	0.00%	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

PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS LIST

Vouch Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
40	21/04/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grounds maintn	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-120.00	-24.00	-144.00
1	28/04/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
2	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Internal audit ;	Canalis LTD	X	-108.32		-108.32
17	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Insurance 2022	Business Services at C	X	-641.66		-641.66
18	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Hall hire and bi	Ellensmere Centre	X	-314.00		-314.00
37	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Coronation exp	MLP Whymer	X	-405.78		-405.78
38	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Handy Man		X	-150.00		-150.00
48	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grounds maintn	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
41	18/05/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Annual playgro	Play Safety Ltd	S	-164.00	-32.80	-196.80
46	21/06/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
3	21/06/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Website/hostin	TEEC	S	-180.00	-36.00	-216.00
31	21/06/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Election expen	Election expenses	X	-250.00		-250.00
47	21/06/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Lights mainten	KM Lighting	S	-202.86	-40.57	-243.43
59	21/06/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
42	21/06/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
7	20/07/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - CAPALC Memb	CAPALC	X	-370.12		-370.12
32	20/07/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Defibrilator pa	Ellensmere Centre	X	-453.00		-453.00
51	20/07/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
43	20/07/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
4	28/07/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Handy Man		X	-515.00		-515.00
5	31/07/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Laurel cut dow	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-230.00	-46.00	-276.00
49	20/09/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-360.00	-72.00	-432.00
52	20/09/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
44	20/09/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
45	20/09/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Receipt - Precept	Precept	E	9,435.00		9,435.00
6	28/09/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	M Whymer	X	-300.00		-300.00
2	30/09/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
82	18/10/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
84	18/10/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Donation News	St Peter's Stetchworth	E	-402.26		-402.26
87	25/10/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
88	27/10/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Street lights po	Opus Energy	L	-375.71	-18.79	-394.50
62	23/11/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
60	23/11/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Accounts subsc	Scribe	S	-526.40	-105.28	-631.68
64	27/11/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Grass cutting	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-240.00	-48.00	-288.00
67	22/12/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Street lights po	Opus Energy	L	-367.88	-18.39	-386.27
69	22/12/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
70	22/12/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - New Streetlight	UK Power Networks	E	-1,464.00		-1,464.00
68	22/12/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Street lights po	SSE	L	-113.29	-5.66	-118.95
71	22/12/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
73	27/12/2023		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Car Park Works	RH Landscapes & Main	S	-495.00	-99.00	-594.00
80	25/01/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - Street lights po	SSE	L	-109.69	-5.48	-115.17
92	25/01/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
90	30/01/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu		Payment - street Light Ma	KM Lighting	S	-1,236.99	-247.40	-1,484.39
95	13/02/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
97	23/02/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
94	23/02/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
105	04/03/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
99	22/03/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
100	22/03/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				
104	22/03/2024		01 Unlty Trust Cu			X				