

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.

The basic position

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) (the Act) governs the work of auditors appointed to smaller authorities. This summary explains the provisions contained in Sections 26 and 27 of the Act. The Act and the [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) also cover the duties, responsibilities and rights of smaller authorities, other organisations and the public concerning the accounts being audited.

As a local elector, or an interested person, you have certain legal rights in respect of the accounting records of smaller authorities. As an interested person you can inspect accounting records and related documents. If you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them. You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the smaller authority form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.

The right to inspect the accounting records

Any interested person can inspect the accounting records, which includes but is not limited to local electors. You can inspect 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. You can copy all, or part, of these records or documents. Your inspection must be about the accounts, or relate to an item in the accounts. You cannot, for example, inspect or copy documents unrelated to the accounts, or that include personal information (Section 26 (6) – (10) of the Act explains what is meant by personal information). You cannot inspect information which is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is information which would prejudice commercial confidentiality if it was released to the public and there is not, set against this, a very strong reason in the public interest why it should nevertheless be disclosed.

When smaller authorities have finished preparing accounts for the financial year and approved them, they must publish them (including on a website). There must be a 30 working day period, called the 'period for the exercise of public rights', during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounting records. Smaller authorities must tell the public, including advertising this on their website, that the accounting records and related documents are available to inspect. By arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records. You may have to pay a copying charge. The 30 working day period must include a common period of inspection during which all smaller authorities' accounting records are available to inspect. This will be 1-14 July 2022 for 2021/22 accounts. The advertisement must set out the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, how you can communicate to the smaller authority that you wish to inspect the accounting records and related documents, the name and address of the auditor, and the relevant legislation that governs the inspection of accounts and objections.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

You should first ask your smaller authority about the accounting records, since they hold all the details. If you are a local elector, your right to ask questions of the external auditor is enshrined in law. However, while the auditor will answer your questions where possible, they are not always obliged to do so. For example, the question might be better answered by another organisation, require investigation beyond the auditor's remit, or involve disproportionate cost (which is borne by the local taxpayer). Give your smaller authority the opportunity first to explain anything in the accounting records that you are unsure about. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you can question the external auditor about the accounting records.

The law limits the time available for you formally to ask questions. This must be done in the period for the exercise of public rights, so let the external auditor know your concern as soon as possible. The advertisement or notice that tells you the accounting records are available to inspect will also give the period for the exercise of public rights during which you may ask the auditor questions, which here

means formally asking questions under the Act. You can ask someone to represent you when asking the external auditor questions.

Before you ask the external auditor any questions, inspect the accounting records fully, so you know what they contain. Please remember that you cannot formally ask questions, under the Act, after the end of the period for the exercise of public rights. You may ask your smaller authority other questions about their accounts for any year, at any time. But these are not questions under the Act.

You can ask the external auditor questions about an item in the accounting records for the financial year being audited. However, your right to ask the external auditor questions is limited. The external auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions. The external auditor cannot answer questions about policies, finances, procedures or anything else unless it is directly relevant to an item in the accounting records. Remember that your questions must always be about facts, not opinions. To avoid misunderstanding, we recommend that you always put your questions in writing.

The right to make objections at audit

You have inspected the accounting records and asked your questions of the smaller authority. Now you may wish to object to the accounts on the basis that an item in them is in your view unlawful or there are matters of wider concern arising from the smaller authority's finances. A local government elector can ask the external auditor to apply to the High Court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, or to issue a report on matters which are in the public interest. You must tell the external auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you think the item is unlawful, or why you think that a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide the external auditor with the evidence you have to support your objection. Disagreeing with income or spending does not make it unlawful. To object to the accounts you must write to the external auditor stating you want to make an objection, including the information and evidence below and you must send a copy to the smaller authority. The notice must include:

- confirmation that you are an elector in the smaller authority's area;
- why you are objecting to the accounts and the facts on which you rely;
- details of any item in the accounts that you think is unlawful; and
- details of any matter about which you think the external auditor should make a public interest report.

Other than it must be in writing, there is no set format for objecting. You can only ask the external auditor to act within the powers available under the [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#).

A final word

You may not use this 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor. Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved, they will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. They may also decide not to consider an objection if they think that it is frivolous or vexatious, or if it repeats an objection already considered. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision not to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, you will have to pay for the action yourself.

For more detailed guidance on public rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication [Local authority accounts: A guide to your rights](#) are available from the NAO website.

If you wish to contact your authority's appointed external auditor please write to the address in paragraph 4 of the *Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return*.

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2021/22 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 2022, 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 2022 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2022** notifying the external auditor.

MORETON, BOBBINGWORTH AND THE LAVERS PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2021/22, 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 2021/22: £18,581 PER AMOUNT £100,000

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2021/22: £16,416 PER AMOUNT £100,000

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 **£200 +VAT** will be payable.

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

- The authority was in existence on 1st April 2018
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2020/21), 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 you are able to confirm that the above statements apply and that 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 2022.

By signing this certificate you are also confirming that you are aware of this requirement.

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date

J. K. Padden

17/05/2022

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

17/05/2022

Signed by Chairman Date

Rebecca V Padden

17/05/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

PC.170

Generic email address of Authority

mbllparishcouncil@gmail.com

Telephone number

07484206445

*Published web address

mbllparishcouncil.com

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 2022. Reminder letters incur a charge of £40 +VAT

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

MORETON, BOBBINGWORTH AND THE LAVERS 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	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:

17/05/2022

and recorded as minute reference:

PC.170

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman

Rosemary W. Padden

Clerk

G. K. Padden

Other 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
✓	

mbparishcouncil.com

FOR PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

MORETON, BOBBINGWORTH AND THE LAVERS PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance	
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £		
1. Balances brought forward	22,907	20,967	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	16,285	17,424	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,696	1,157	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	8,345	10,044	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	12,574	6,372	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	20,967	23,133	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	20,967	23,133	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	5,796	5,796	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).	
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

G.K. Paadlan

Date 17/05/2022

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

17/05/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

PC.170

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

Rosemary Paadlan

MORETON, BOBBINGWORTH AND THE
LAVERS

PARISH COUNCIL

FINAL ACCOUNTS 2021/2022

Parish Clerk & RFO
Mrs G Paddan

Financial Summary 2021/2022

The Council started the year with £20,967.94 in the bank. The precept set for 2021/2022 was £17,424.00.

The total income (including precept, bank interest (£15.55)) for 2021/22 was £18,581.49 This also included a VAT refund of £1141.93 for the period 2021/2022.

The total expenditure for 2021/2022 was £16,436.07 (which included VAT £312.84).

The balances of the accounts as at 31 March 2022, as follows:

i)	Unity Deposit Account	£22,679.16
ii)	Unity Current Account	£ 454.19
	Total	<u>£23,133.35</u>

Note: The Parish Councils accounts are completed on a receipts and payment basis.

External Auditors Statement of Account for 2021/2022

	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £
1. Balances Brough forward	22,907	20,967
2. (+) Annual Precept	16,285	17,424
3. (-) total other receipts	2,696	1,157
4. (+) Staff costs	8,345	10,044
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. (-) Total other payments	12,574	6,372
7. (=) Balances carried forward	20,967	23,133
8. Total cash and investments	20,967	23,133
9. Total Fixed Assets	5,796	5,796
10. Total borrowings	0	0
These figures include VAT		

2021/2022 – Final Budget -v- Actual
And Specific Earmarked Funds

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>2021/22</u>
	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>
		<u>SPENT</u>
CLERK'S SALARY/HMRC/PAYROLL	7,500.00	11,306.26
HOME OFFICE	520.00	350.00
PHOTOCOPYING	100.00	-
MILEAGE	150.00	49.05
INSURANCE	370.00	363.53
GRANTS	3,000.00	200.00
ELECTIONS	-	-
POSTAGE AND STATIONERY	150.00	187.50
GENERAL ADMIN	450.00	18.00
SUBSCRIPTIONS EALC/NALC/RCCE	450.00	432.09
AUDIT	125.00	125.00
CHRISTMAS -OPEN MTG EVENT (S137)	500.00	130.35
VILLAGE HALL HIRE	250.00	272.00
MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER (VE DAY 2020/21)	250.00	415.70
INFORMATION COMMISSIONER FEE	45.00	40.00
LEGAL EXPENSES (Nags Head Legal/Planning)	500.00	220.00
BANK CHARGES	72.00	72.00
SOFTWARE SUBSCRIPTIONS	170.00	263.90
TRAINING CLERK/COUNCILLOR	1,200.00	525.00
GENERAL PARISH EXPENSES	1,000.00	18.00
SANDBAGS/SAND	-	-
COVID RELATED COSTS	2,000.00	-
QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE	-	-
WAR MEMORIAL	-	-
COVID RELATED COSTS	-	-
VAT	-	312.84
SUB TOTALS	<u>18,802.00</u>	<u>15,321.22</u>
<u>Specific Earmarked reserves 2021/22</u>		
BOBBINGWORTH CLOCK	200.00	-
ELECTIONS	400.00	464.85
ASSET MAINT	500.00	650.00
LEGAL EXPENSES	-	-
SUB TOTALS	<u>1,100.00</u>	<u>1,114.85</u>
TOTALS	<u>£19,902.00</u>	<u>£16,416.07</u>

Earmarked Reserve at 31/3/31 - £200.00 (Bobbingworth Clock)
INCOME

Precept 2021/22	£17,424.00
Bank Interest	£ 15.55
VAT Reclaim	£ 1,141.93
Total Income	<u>£18,581.48</u>

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2022

Balance per bank statement as at 31 March 2022	£	£
Unity Deposit Account	22,679.16	
Unity Current Account	454.19	
		£23,133.35
Less: Any un-presented cheques at 31 March 2022	0.00	
Add: Any un-banked cash at 31 March 2022	0.00	

CASH BOOK

Opening Balance 1 April 2021	20,967.94	
Add: Receipts in the year (precept + int+ VAT reclaim)	18,581.48	
		£39,549.42
Less: Payments to 31 March 2021	16,416.07	
Balance (receipts and payments book) as at 31 March 2022		<u>£23,133.35</u>

Variances

EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	2021/22	Difference	Explanation
	2021/22	ACTUAL SPENT		
CLERK'S SALARY/HMRC/PAYROLL	7,500.00	11,306.26	(3,806.26)	Under estimated HMRC + locum and incoming Clerk (handover) additional salaries
HOME OFFICE	520.00	350.00	170.00	
PHOTOCOPIING	100.00		100.00	No photocopying - sent out everything electronically
MILEAGE	150.00	49.05	100.95	
INSURANCE	370.00	363.53	6.47	
GRANTS	3,000.00	200.00	2,800.00	Moreton school donation 21/22
ELECTIONS				
POSTAGE AND STATIONERY	150.00	187.50	(37.50)	Purchase of MS Office and USB hub
GENERAL ADMIN (New Laptop 2018/20)	450.00	18.00	432.00	
SUBSCRIPTIONS EALC/NALC/RCCE	450.00	432.09	17.91	
AUDIT	125.00	125.00		
CHRISTMAS - OPEN MTG EVENT (S137)	500.00	130.35	369.65	Refreshments and christmas lights poster
VILLAGE HALL HIRE	250.00	272.00	(22.00)	Additional meetings
MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER (VE DAY 2020/21)	250.00	415.70	(165.70)	Housing survey need
INFORMATION COMMISSIONER FEE	45.00	40.00	5.00	
LEGAL EXPENSES (Nags Head Legal/Planning)	500.00	220.00	280.00	
BANK CHARGES	72.00	72.00		
SOFTWARE SUBSCRIPTIONS	170.00	263.90	(93.90)	Vikatechost email £30 + Wix (website)+ Zoom
TRAINING CLERK/COUNCILLOR	1,200.00	525.00	675.00	
GENERAL PARISH EXPENSES	1,000.00	18.00	982.00	
SANDBAGS/SAND				
COVID RELATED COSTS	2,000.00		2,000.00	
QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE				
WAR MEMORIAL				
COVID RELATED COSTS				
VAT (2019/2020)		312.84	(312.84)	Being claimed
SUB TOTALS	18,802.00	15,301.22	3,500.78	
Specific Earmarked reserves 2021/22 - 1/1/22				
BOBBINGWORTH CLOCK	200.00		200.00	
ELECTIONS	400.00	464.85	(64.85)	
ASSET MAINT	500.00	650.00	(150.00)	
LEGAL EXPENSES				
SUB TOTALS	1,100.00	1,114.85	(14.85)	
TOTALS	19,902.00	16,416.07	3,485.93	