

Contact details

Name of smaller authority: **Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Wiltshire**

Please complete this form and send it back to us with the AGAR or exemption certificate

	Clerk/RFO (Main contact)	Chair
Name	Sarah Jeffries PSLCC	Angus Neish
Address	9 Beech Grove Warminster Wiltshire BA120AB	Rodmead Farm Rodmead Maiden Bradley Warminster Wiltshire BA12 7HP
Daytime telephone number	01985213436	01985844689
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Smaller authority name: Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION
OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY
RETURN (EXEMPT AUTHORITY)**

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 25, 26 and 27

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/404)

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement <u>14.7.2020</u> (a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The AGAR has been published with this notice. It will not be reviewed by the appointed auditor, since the smaller authority has certified itself as exempt from the appointed auditor's review. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the AGAR, the accounting records for the financial year to which it relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2020, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) <u>Sarah Jeffries PSLLC RFO</u> <u>9 Beech Grove Warrington WA12 0AB</u> <u>01985 215436 maidenbradley@virginmedia.com</u></p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>Monday 15 June 2020</u> 1st September 2020</p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>Friday 24 July 2020</u> 12th October 2020</p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and• The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority. <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is only subject to review by the appointed auditor if questions or objections raised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 lead to the involvement of the auditor. The appointed auditor is:</p> <p>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 15 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD (sba@pkf-littlejohn.com)</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) <u>Sarah Jeffries PSLLC</u> <u>RFO.</u></p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must start on or before 1 September 2020.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>



Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council

Internal Audit Report 2019-20

Claire Lingard

Consultant Auditor

***For and on behalf of
Auditing Solutions Ltd***

Background

Statute requires all town and parish councils to arrange for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return.

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2019-20 financial year, which took place on the 20th April 2020.

Internal Audit Approach

The 2019-20 Year End Internal audit has been undertaken remotely due to the Covid-19 virus situation and in accordance with Government advice. All files and supporting document required to complete the audit have been supplied, as requested, electronically.

In undertaking our review for the year, we have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential misrecording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts / Annual Return. Our programme of cover is designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council has appropriate and robust financial systems in place that operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Internal Audit Report' as part of the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) process, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

Based on the satisfactory completion of our programme of work for the year, we have concluded that the Council has, again maintained adequate and effective internal control arrangements. We are pleased to report that there are no issues arising this year warranting formal comment and none warranting any recommendation.

We are pleased to note that the council retains the Quality Gold Level of the Local Council Award Scheme and take this opportunity to acknowledge the exemplary quality of records maintained by the Clerk. We also acknowledge that the last few months of the 2019-20 financial year have been challenging for all Clerks, with the disruption caused to their day to day operational and administrative functions, due to the Covid-19 virus situation.

We take this opportunity to thank the Clerk for her assistance during the Internal audit review which, has been more important than in previous years and which has ensured the smooth progress of our review process. We have completed and signed the 'Internal Audit Report', having concluded that the control objectives set out in that Report have been achieved within the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Clerk has maintained the Council's accounting records using Excel spreadsheets, which we consider generally adequate in view of the number of annual transactions. The Council maintained one bank account with the Unity Trust Bank and continues to make all payments electronically.

We have checked and agreed the spreadsheet detail in full to the relevant statements for the full financial year, also verifying the accuracy of the year-end cashbook / bank reconciliation ensuring that no long-standing uncleared cheques or other anomalous entries exist. We have consequently verified the accurate disclosure of the year-end balance in the Annual Return.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Corporate Governance

We have examined the content of the Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations noting that both were readopted during the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2019. We Further note that the Financial Regulations were revised again, to reflect the amendments in the new NALC model documents are Adopted by the Council at its full meeting in October under Minute reference number 19/248.

We have reviewed the Council's minutes for the current year to determine whether any issues exist that may have either a legal or financial impact on the Council and its future financial stability and are pleased to record that no such items appear to exist at present.

Conclusion

There was one minor issue concerning the Council's Minutes: The Clerk, in error, commenced the September 2019 at Minute reference number 200, rather than 100 as it should have been. The Clerk has issued a statement recording that Minute References 19/100 – 19/199 have not been used and this will be formally recorded in the Minutes of Council's next Full meeting.

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting recommendation.

Review of Payments

As a result of the need to conduct this year's audit remotely, and in light of the Council's full compliance in previous year's Internal Audits, we have sampled payments made during the year: Every sixth invoice irrespective of value and every invoice in excess of £750.00 to ensure that the following criteria were met: -

- Payments were supported by a trade invoice or acknowledgement of receipt;
- VAT has been calculated correctly and is recovered at appropriate intervals;

- The Council at a Council meeting approved each payment; and,
- Payments have been correctly analysed in preparation of the year-end Statement of Accounts.

We also note that periodic VAT returns have been prepared for the 2019-20 financial year, the in-year claims, being repaid by HMRC during the financial year with the outstanding balance for the year being reclaimed at the start of 2019-20.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

We are pleased to note that the Council has again reviewed and formally re-adopted its Risk Assessment documentation at the December 2019 meeting of the Full Council under Minute reference 19/250. The clerk continues to use the financially oriented risk register used by a neighbouring parish, to form the basis of the Council's register.

The Council's insurance cover for the 2019-20 financial year was arranged by Came & Co., with Inspire underwritten by Axa. We have examined the insurance schedule noting that Public and Employer's Liability cover are each in place and set at £10 million respectively, Officials Indemnity at £500k, Fidelity Guarantee at £150,000 and Business Interruption at £10,000: we consider these levels appropriate for the Council's present needs.

Finally, in this area of our review, we note that the council has a play area and recreation ground at Maiden Bradley which is leased at a peppercorn rent. A robust monthly Health & Safety Check is conducted by a councillor and the report is returned to the Clerk for her retention. All playground Health & Safety reports appear as an Agenda item at the meetings of the Full Council, remedial actions resolved and formally minuted.

The independent annual Playground Inspection was undertaken by RoSPA in 2019 with the report and findings scrutinised and actioned at the October meeting of the Full Council under Minute Reference 19/242.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Budgetary Control and Reserves

The Council's minutes, together with the supporting papers provided to Council indicate that, once again, Members undertook a robust and well documented Budget setting and Precept determination process. Members considered and approved the 2020-21 financial year Budget and Precept, setting the latter at £24,234 (£17,056 prior year) in the January 2020 meeting of the Full Council under minute reference 19/353. We are also pleased to note that Councillors continue to receive regular income and expenditure reports along with bank balance detail at each meeting.

We note that the Council's total reserves stood at £7,935 as at the 31st March 2020, with Earmarked reserves standing at £2,792 leaving a General Reserve fund of £5,143 (£3,075 prior year). The General Reserve balance equates to approximately three-and-a-half-months' revenue spending at the 2019-20 level, sitting at the lower end of the CiPFA recommended levels of between 3 and 6 months expenditure, at the prior year level.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Income

The Council receives only limited income, mainly from the annual precept, grants, small donations and contributions from other Parish Councils towards joint expenditure and bank interest.

As indicated in the first section of the report, we have again reviewed the year's bank statements and other available supporting documentation in full agreeing detail to the cashbooks.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash Account

The Council's policy is not to maintain any form of cash float with any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the clerk or members reclaimed and paid in line with normal trader payment procedures. Subsequently, there are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Salaries and Wages

We have, as in previous years, checked the basis of the clerk's salary payments for the year, together with relevant tax deductions, which are paid over to HMRC accordingly with no issues identified.

We note that the Clerk received a formal appraisal during the Budget setting and Precept determination process and resultantly was granted a pay award for FY 2019-20 which increased her SCP to 25, effective from the 1st April 2019.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Fixed Asset Registers

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to maintain a record of all assets owned. We are pleased to note compliance with this requirement, the Clerk maintaining an appropriate

register with values identified both at cost price, or where unknown, at the best approximation thereto, together with the annually uplifted insurance value to assist with budgetary planning for future replacements.

We have noted that the Asset Register has been reviewed and readopted during FY 2019-20 with no additions or removals. Subsequently, the total Fixed Asset Register value remains set at £39,610 (£39,610 prior year) and has been correctly reflected in the value reported in the year's Annual Return at Box 9 of Section 2.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Investments and Loans

It is noted that council continues to maintain a single current account with the Unity Trust Bank. There are no surplus funds available for investments.

The Council has no loans either repayable by, or to it, as at the 31st March 2020.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area of our review warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Accounts and Audit Regulations, as amended periodically, require all councils to prepare annually a Statement of Accounts, which is now in the form of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at Section 2, which is, together with the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1, subject to independent external audit examination and certification.

As part of our review process, we have examined the Council's procedures in relation to the identification of detail for inclusion in Section 2 of the Return, which is produced using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, and used by the Clerk & RFO to provide the accounting statements. We have agreed detail therein to Section 2 of the 2019-20 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area and, on the basis of the work undertaken during the course of our review for the year, we have "signed off" the Internal Audit Report in the year's Annual Governance and Accountability Return assigning positive assurances in all areas.

Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council

Receipts and Payments

Reconciliation of Balances 2019 - 2020

Year Ended
31st March
2019

Month Ended
Mar-20

£5,685.60	Balance brought forward 1st April	6024.93
£5,685.60	Bank Balance	6024.93
£17,466.86	Add Total Receipts	18911.51
£23,152.46	Sub-Total	24936.44
£ 17,127.53	Less Payments	£ 17,002.00
£6,024.93	Balance carried forward	£ 7,934.44
	Excess of payments over receipts	
	These accumulated funds are held in the following	
£6,024.93	Unity Trust Account Number 20363594	£ 7,934.44
	Total	
£0.00		
£0.00	Total	

Signed.....
Chairman

Unpresented cheques	
Total	£7,934.44

Date 14th April 2020

Signed.....
Responsible Financial Officer
Date 14th April 2020

Signed
Councillor
Internal Audit Check

Date	Minute Number	Description	Precept Grant	Grants	Laptop use	Contributions	Refund	VAT Claim	Total	Year to date	Document Number
05.04.19		Horningsham Parish Council laptop usage		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£8.00	1
05.04.19		Horningsham Parish Council laptop usage		£16.00	£16.00				£16.00	£24.00	2
25.04.19		Wiltshire Council Precept Payment	£8,528.19						£8,528.19	£8,552.19	3
31.05.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£8,560.19	4
19.07.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage June July August		£24.00	£24.00				£24.00	£8,584.19	5
10.09.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Sept		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£8,592.19	6
25.09.19		Wiltshire Council Precept Payment	£8,528.18						£8,528.18	£17,120.37	7
14.10.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Oct		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£17,128.37	8
18.10.19		HMRC VAT Reclaim						£1,174.64	£1,174.64	£18,303.01	9
25.11.19		Horningsham Parish Council It Usage Nov		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£18,311.01	10
13.01.20		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Dec Jan		£16.00	£16.00				£16.00	£18,327.01	11
21.02.20		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Feb		£16.00	£16.00				£16.00	£18,343.01	12
04.03.20		HMRC VAT Reclaim						£568.50	£568.50	£18,911.51	13
Total			£17,056.37	£112.00				£1,743.14	£18,911.51		

Date	Minute Number	Description	Precept Grant	Grants	Laptop use	Contributions	Refund	VAT Claim	Total	Year to date	Document Number
05.04.19		Horningsham Parish Council laptop usage		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£8.00	1
05.04.19		Horningsham Parish Council laptop usage		£16.00	£16.00				£16.00	£24.00	2
25.04.19		Wiltshire Council Precept Payment	£8,528.19						£8,528.19	£8,552.19	3
31.05.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£8,560.19	4
		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage June July									
19.07.19		August		£24.00	£24.00				£24.00	£8,584.19	5
10.09.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Sept		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£8,592.19	6
25.09.19		Wiltshire Council Precept Payment	£8,528.18						£8,528.18	£17,120.37	7
14.10.19		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Oct		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£17,128.37	8
18.10.19		HMRC VAT Reclaim						£1,174.64	£1,174.64	£18,303.01	9
25.11.19		Horningsham Parish Council It Usage Nov		£8.00	£8.00				£8.00	£18,311.01	10
13.01.20		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Dec Jan		£16.00	£16.00				£16.00	£18,327.01	11
21.02.20		Horningsham Parish Council IT Usage Feb		£16.00	£16.00				£16.00	£18,343.01	12
04.03.20		HMRC VAT Reclaim						£568.50	£568.50	£18,911.51	13
		Total	£17,056.37	£112.00				£1,743.14	£18,911.51		

Bank reconciliation – pro forma

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It **must** be included in the column headed "Year ending 31 March 20xx" in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are reconciled on a receipts and payments basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that un-presented cheques should be entered on a negative basis.

Name of smaller authority: Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): Wiltshire

Financial year ending 31 March 20xx

Prepared by (Name and Role): Sarah Jeffries Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

Date: 16.04.20

	£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 31/03/20		
account 1	7,934.4	
[add more accounts if necessary]		
		7,934.4
Petty cash float (if applicable)		-
Less: any un-presented cheques as at 31/3/20 (enter these as negative numbers)		
[add more lines if necessary]		
		-
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/20		
		-
Net balances as at 31/3/20 (Box 8)		7,934.4

Reconciliation between Box 7 and Box 8 in Section 2 - pro forma

(applies to Accounting Statements prepared on an income and expenditure basis only)

Please complete the highlighted boxes.

Name of smaller authority:

Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Wiltshire

There should only be a difference between Box 7 and Box 8 where the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR) have been prepared on an income and expenditure basis and there have been adjustments for debtors/prepayments and creditors/receipts in advance at the year end. Please provide details of the year end adjustments, showing how the net difference between them is equal to the difference between Boxes 7 and 8.

	£	£
Box 7: Balances carried forward		-
Deduct: Debtors (enter these as negative numbers)		
1		
2		
3		
Deduct: Payments made in advance (prepayments) (enter these as negative numbers)		
1		
2		
Total deductions		
Add:		
Creditors (must not include community infrastructure levy (CIL) receipts)		
1		
2		
Add:		
Receipts in advance (must not include deferred grants/loans received)		
1		
2		
Total additions		
Box 8: Total cash and short term investments		

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: **Malvern Broadsley with Yarnfield Parish Council**
 County area (local councils and VTUs): **WYVERN**

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);
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2019 £	2020 £	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	5,685	6,025				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	15,739	17,056	1,326	8.43%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	1,737	1,855	118	6.79%	NO		
4 Staff Costs	4,844	5,155	311	6.42%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	12,284	11,846	-438	3.57%	NO		
7 Balances Carried Forward	6,025	7,935			NO	VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	6,025	7,935				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	39,610	39,610	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

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 2

To be completed only by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other smaller authorities* where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, that meet the qualifying criteria, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review

Guidance notes on completing Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

1. Every smaller authority in England where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less **must**, following the end of each financial year, complete Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices*, unless the authority:
 - a) does not meet the qualifying criteria for exemption; or
 - b) does not wish to certify itself as exempt
2. Smaller authorities where the higher of all gross annual income or gross annual expenditure **does not exceed** £25,000 and that meet the qualifying criteria as set out in the Certificate of Exemption **are able to declare themselves exempt** from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review **provided** the authority **completes**:
 - a) The **Certificate of Exemption**, page 3 and returns a copy of it to the external auditor **either** by email or by post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2020**. Failure to do so will result in reminder letter(s) for which the Authority will be charged £40 +VAT for each letter; and
 - b) The **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Part 2)** which is made up of:
 - **Annual Internal Audit Report (page 4)** to be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement (page 5)** to be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 2 – Accounting Statements (page 6)** to be completed and approved by the authority.**NOTE: Authorities certifying themselves as exempt SHOULD NOT send the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor.**
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement before approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and both **must** be approved and published on a website **before 1 July 2020**.

Publication Requirements

Smaller authorities **must** publish various documents on a public website as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. These include:

- **Certificate of Exemption**, page 3
- **Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20**, page 4
- **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**, page 5
- **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20**, page 6
- Analysis of variances
- Bank reconciliation
- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Limited Assurance Review

Providing the authority certifies itself as exempt, and completes and publishes the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, there is **no** requirement for the authority to have a limited assurance review.

Any smaller authority may, however, request a limited assurance review. In these circumstances the authority should **not certify itself as exempt, and not complete the** Certificate of Exemption, but complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 and return it to the external auditor for review together with the supporting documentation requested by the external auditor.

The cost to the smaller authority for the review will be **£200 +VAT**.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20, 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 2020. 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 2020. 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 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 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 if possible before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making amendments to the completed annual return. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness at the meeting at which it is signed off.
- **You should inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant 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 2019) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2020).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish 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 2020**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes 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 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 from last year to this year been published?	✓	
	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>)	W/A	

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2019/20 Part 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 2020, 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 2020 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than 30 June 2020 notifying the external auditor.

MAIDEN BRADLEY WITH VARN FIELD PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2019/20, 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 2019/20:

£18,911

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2019/20:

£17,002

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 Part 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 2016
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2018/19), 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 a public website* before 1 July 2020. **By signing this certificate you are also confirming that you are aware of this requirement.**

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer

Date

SIGNED

15.04.2020

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

14.07.2020

Signed by Chairman

Date

SIGNED

14.07.2020

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE 19/439

Email of Authority

Telephone number

maidenbradley@virginmedia.com

07540611906

*Published web address

www.maidenbradley.org.uk

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 2020. Reminder letters incur a charge of £40 +VAT

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

MAIDEN BRADLEY WITH YARNFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 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	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	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.			NO PETTY CASH SYSTEM IN OPERATION
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 and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓		
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 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick 'not covered')	✓		
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations	✓		
M. (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

21/04/2020

Name of person who carried out the internal audit
CV Lingard for and on behalf of Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date 21/04/2020

*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 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

maiden Bradley with Yarnfield 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 2020, 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
			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:

14/07/2020

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE 19/434

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

Chairman

Clerk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

Maiden Bradley with Yanfield Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	5686	6025	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	15730	17056	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1737	1855	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	4844	5155	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	12284	11846	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	6025	7935	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	6025	7935	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	39610	39610	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	The Council as a body corporate acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		N/A	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 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 14.07.2020.

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

14 07 2020

as recorded in minute reference:

19/435

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