

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF LOWER PENN PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT VICTORY HALL, LOWER PENN HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND APRIL 2026 AT 7.15pm

Councillors: S McEwen (Chairman), Mrs C Taylor, D Hughes, M Mulvihill, Cllr K Jones, G Fanthom and K Crane joined at item 37/26.

Also in attendance: Mrs J Cree (Clerk), County / District Cllr Mrs V Wilson, District Cllr R Reade and 10 members of the public.

34/26. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies of absence were received and accepted from Cllrs D Williams,

It was noted that we have a further vacancy following the sad passing of Cllr D Everette. Our thoughts are with his family.

35/26. To fill vacant seats via co-option if any further candidates come forward

It was proposed by Cllr D Hughes and seconded Cllr Mrs C Taylor to nominate Kevin Jones to be co-opted to the Council. On a vote this was carried.

He signed his declaration of office form and joined the meeting.

36/26. Declarations of Councillors' Interest.

District Cllr R Reade declared an interest in any planning applications and BESS issues due to sitting on South Staffordshire District Councils Planning Committee.

37/26. Public Forum - Democratic fifteen-minute period / public question time

Cllr K Crane joined the meeting at 19.30.

Standing orders were raised to enable members of the public to speak.

Members raised the following items:-

- LGR – Kath Perry, has signed a document on the 19th March 2026, along with 9 other chairman, the implications are that the areas they are possibly joining some of the Councils have a debt, and others don't. What would happen with regard to the debts. Cllr Mrs V Wilson reported that the preferred options have been put forward and the Government will make the decision. The debt etc will be discussed once the new authority has been formed in the next year. MP Mike Wood reported that the letter referred to was relating to the strategic authority which is slightly different.
- A resident raised the concerns over the massive increase in the precept for the Parish Council, she ran through the list of new projects, for the new year. The Chairman reported that before the funds are spent the correct procedures will take place, to ensure best value. A parish survey is due to come out to all residents also to see the expenditure they would like to see.
- Adoption of Market Lane – the County Council will not adopt a private road.

- County Cllr Mrs V Wilson was thanked for her communication on the intervention drain that has been discussed.

Standing orders were reinstated.

38/26. To receive for confirmation and adoption, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5TH March 2026.

The minutes of the above meeting were agreed and accepted. They were proposed by Cllr Mrs C Taylor and seconded by Cllr D Hughes.

39/26. County / District Councillors to address the Council on any matters relevant to the Parish

County / District Councillor Mrs V Wilson reported that:-

- Reported on the Parish Assembly's for local councillors to attend, initially to discuss LGR, and its continuing with the meeting.
- Many road defects have been marked with white paint.
- The Government awarded £15 million pounds to Highways for the Highways in Staffordshire. They have said they will use it on pothole repairs only, not on any development projects.
- Capital Funding is allocated by Staffordshire Council, in South Staffordshire this year it is going to the north of the County, the only place is in Perton.
- Dimmingsdale bridge meeting is the 29th April with Dianne Firken.

Cllr R Reade reported on the following item's:-

- Robyn's Nest – the hedge and trees have been removed and contravenes the planning conditions and he is having to replant the removed trees and hedge. It's noted that there appears to be waste being imported to the site which has been reported to enforcement.
- 43 Springhill Park – this has been approved, and the applicant may go to appeal on this application.
- Ivydene - he will check what is happening and report back.

40/26. Planning Matters to be discussed

SPCA are now offering a free service on planning matters, and the Chairman will work alongside with new Cllr

To note funding expenditure for the Planning / legal advisor

It was noted that there is still approximately 2 days expenses for the Springhill Lane planning application to be receive.

Planning Applications

Decisions

26/00078/LHSHLD 2 Drive Fields Lower Penn

Single storey flat roofed rear extension projecting 6 metres from the original rear elevation - Approved

Appeals – None**Enforcement** - None

Cllr R Reade left the meeting at this point 20.20pm

Bess Items for discussion and S106

The Chairman reported that he has been progressing with NESO what is happening with the BESS sites, to see what is happening within the Parish, and he will share with SSDC Helen Benbow.

It was noted that the new BESS factsheet cannot be displayed on the noticeboards due to the limitations of the size of them.

The FOI from NESO needs to be publicised also.

Severn Trent Water he has been speaking to various department re the aquifers, in relation to what would happen to our water supply if a leak happened on a BESS site.

Update on S106 in relation to BESS sites in Lower Penn, a meeting took place st SSDC, the Councils are working more together following these meetings. A s106 agreement has been asked retrospectively asked for the approved sites in Lower Penn, and also any potential large developments that come forward. The Council has submitted what could be funded with costs going from £5000 to £100,000.

Cllr R Reade left the meeting at this point.

New Planning application

Objection to Springhill Lane Housing development: 26/00172/OUTM

Outline planning permission (with all matters reserved except primary means of access from Springhill Lane) is sought for the construction of up to 65 dwellings creation of associated vehicular and pedestrian accesses, drainage features, open space, and associated infrastructure.

- **Green Belt** - The development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt; .it is previously undeveloped land and does not meet the very special circumstances in which development would be allowed. Housing in itself is not a very special circumstance. The proposed development is not compatible with uses considered appropriate in the Green Belt.
- **Greenbelt** - The proposed development would set a dangerous precedent for inappropriate development in the Green Belt and create further challenges to the viability of vacant and allocated housing sites within the District.
- **Precedent** - Acceptance of greenfield development would create further challenges to the viability of vacant brownfield or allocated housing sites within the district. This would be unacceptable.

- **Safety** - Highway safety. 65 new dwellings could result in 400-500 traffic movements a day. Is Springhill Lane built for this? Is that junction, the cross-roads safe? Details relating to turning down towards Lower Penn village have been glossed over. Also, there is no mention or consideration given to the extra nursery traffic.
- **Golden Rules** - The application fails to meet the 'golden rules' test. The application only proposes up to 50% affordable housing. The threshold is a minimum of 50% affordable housing contribution.
- **Landscape** - The proposal would result in the loss of an area identified as being of high landscape sensitivity, which is visually prominent within the wider landscape. The site is elevated and highly visible. It would also set a precedent, leading to further incremental encroachment into the open countryside and result in the loss of high value landscape, biodiversity corridors and having a negative impact on wildlife, flora and fauna. It would also harm the rural character of the area, encroaching further into the open countryside. The site would be seen from Langley Road and beyond. It is also outside of any settlement boundary.
- **Biodiversity** - The development fails to deliver the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements, resulting in a proposed deficit of -63.57% for Habitat units and -5.00% Hedgerow units, which may increase further as the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was not undertaken in an optimal period. The development would result in a significant loss to the habitats and wildlife these areas support. The development would have an overall substantial detrimental impact. If you live in the vicinity of the site and/ or back on to it please note the wildlife that you witness.
- **Location** - The location is unsustainable with no public transport provision on site, or bus stops within 400m. The site is inaccessible by sustainable transport and would require private car journeys for transport. Being sustainable is a key element of reclassifying this green belt as grey, so evidencing lack of public transport, lack of cycle routes, unsafe roads, the steep incline of Springhill Lane and accessibility for disabled users with that hill is important. Also, how you get to your GP, schools, and large supermarket and whether there is public transport to them. Remember as the site is in South Staffs, their schools, would probably be the first port of call but parents can choose. Are there spaces at your schools and GP practices?
- **Noise** - No noise impact survey undertaken despite residents nearby and the effect on mental health.
- **Drainage** - No drainage plans. How can a site be approved without these, especially after the issue the nursery had with drainage whereby a sustainable solution was never implemented, and a giant cess pit is used.
- **Water** - Water supply issues in Lower Penn. We are all aware how low our water pressure is in Springhill. How will a new Development affect this.
- **Consultation** – The response to Dwello's consultation exercise was understandable poor by the number of representations and the content. How can a proper consultation take place with the public when the plans are so basic? More information needs to be provided by the developer – ie the type of houses and does it accord with South Staffs District Council housing requirements? Reading this consultation feedback information, it is clear this housing development is not required.

This application was approved to be sent to the District Council.

County Cllr Mrs V Wilson has spoken to the Highways Office, and they have requested further information with regard to the access to the site. The access is too narrow for certain vehicles such as bin lorries or construction vehicles of a certain size.

41/26. To receive an update on outgoing items

a) Community Speed-watch update on sessions undertaken in the last month

Cllr Mrs C Taylor, the sessions will start the end of April. If anyone can help and join the group.

Community speedwatch signs are located in the Parish where they are allowed to monitor the traffic.

b) Speed Indicator Device data

The SID data had been collected from the SID by the Clerk and this was shared with members at the start of the meeting. Because of the data gathered from the SID, we have now seen the official speed camera van in the area.

Cllr K Crane is speaking to the Police and he is trying to get this moved forward. He will also send the new data through to them.

c) Community Activities

Cllr Mrs C Taylor reported that there are the following events:-

- Successful Easter Charity event on the 21st March, great turnout. There were various charities that benefited from the funds raised. Thanks to everyone that came and supported the event and helped making the food and cakes.
- The Choir will be singing on the 5th September to raise funds for Victory Hall, tickets are £10 each.
- 7th November Christmas Fair will take place in a similar way to the Easter event.
- 16th December for coffee and Christmas cake.

d) Victory Hall

Cllr Mrs C Taylor reported they have many organisations that use the hall. A calendar of events will be produced so people can see what happening in case they wish to join.

They do a lot of children's parties also.

A date will be circulated for a clean up day, with a skip on site, to get the area tidy. The hedges were cut before the bird nesting season.

They have paint for the hall, and paint the stage area at the same time. The holes in the wall will be repaired.

Invoices were sent out in March for £1054, March but prebooked events would not be covered.

e) War Memorial / Stone

Cllr Mrs C Taylor reported that she is still working on this project and will report back to a future meeting. The only funds that have been committed are with the University.

f) Noticeboards

This was deferred until the survey results have come in.

h) Neighbourhood Plan (inc. residents meeting when appropriate)

Cllr D Hughes reported that the leaflet will be hand delivered and collected back a week later, with Cllr M Mulvihill and Cllr K Jones.

With regard to the War Memorial Stone and noticeboards and benches, hopefully we will get feedback of what the people of Lower Penn want us to spend Parish funds on and where.

Market Lane will cut the area down and he will need help and needs direction on what to cut off the hedgerow. By Ebstree the hedge is also coming out into the middle of the road, and this needs to be cut back as a matter of urgency. The landowner needs to be contacted.

The rubbish that has been dumped at Ebstree has been reported to SSDC and circulated via social media.

Perhaps a regular newsletter may be an idea.

42/26. Clerks report

The following items were noted:-
Council Enquiry - Council Precept
Neighbourhood Governance Pack
Community Governance Review

43/26. Accounts for payment and Year end figures to the 31st March 2026

The accounts listed below were agreed and noted: -

£413.44	Clerks Salary and exp	April
£315.95	HMRC	April
£35.57	EE and Microsoft	
£135.00	BG Services	March

The year end accounts were noted and accepted as set out as Appendix 1 to these minutes, the Internal Auditors report will be discussed at the next meeting.

44/26. Items for future agendas

In memory of Cllr D Everett, Springhill Lane Housing App, PA System, Phone box project.

45/26. Date of next meeting

Thursday 7th May 2026

Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Appendix 1 to the minutes of the 2nd April Parish Council meeting.

BALANCE SHEET FOR 31st March 2026

OPENING BALANCES 1/4/25

BUSINESS PREMIUN ACCOUNT 20560022		£2,031.18
BUSINESS ACCOUNT 10106240		£18,895.73
CURRENT ACCOUNT		£17,525.30
Upresented chqS		-£135.00
BALANCES AT 31/03/2025		£38,317.21
RECEIPTS	£18,435.64	
PAYMENTS	£22,490.71	
		£34,262.14

BUSINESS PREMIUN ACCOUNT 20560022		£2,055.85
BUSINESS ACCOUNT 10106240		£19,125.22
CURRENT ACCOUNT		£13,081.07
BALANCES AT 31/03/2026		£34,262.14

Guidance notes on completing Form 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26, 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 2026. 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 2026**. 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 AGAR 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 before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) **must** be approved before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references, even where approved on the same day.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) **must** certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority **must** in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments **must** be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness at the meeting at which it is signed off.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic 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 2025) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2026)
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights for a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish, on the authority website/webpage, 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 2026**

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 Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2026 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	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>)		✓

**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 2025/26 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 2026 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 2026 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than **30 June 2026** notifying the external auditor.

Lower Penn Parish Council

certifies that during the financial year 2025/26, 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 2025/26: **£18,436** AMOUNT IN POUNDS

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2025/26: **£22,491** AMOUNT IN POUNDS

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 2022
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2024/25), 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 2026.

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

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date

SIGNATURE REQUIRED **DDMMYYYY**

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

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chair

Date

SIGNATURE REQUIRED **DDMMYYYY**

MINUTE REFERENCE

Generic email address of Authority

clerk@lowerpenn-pc.gov.uk

Telephone number

0985219771

*Published web address

www.lowerpenn-pc.gov.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 2026. Reminder letters for late submission will incur a charge of £40 + VAT.

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Lower Penn Parish Council

www.lowerpenn-pc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, 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 2025/26 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. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all 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 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")			
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).			
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.			
P. (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

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

*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 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

Lower Penn 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 2026, 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 have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.	✓		has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.

*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:

2025/26

and recorded as minute reference:

2025/26

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

Chair

2025/26

Clerk

2025/26

Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

	Yes	No
The authority website is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.		

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ILLUSTRATION: WEBSITE/WEBSITE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

Lower Penn Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	38,300	38,317	<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	17,260	17,260	<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	2,980	1,176	<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	6,708	8,753	<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	13,515	13,738	<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	38,317	34,262	<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	38,317	34,242	<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	31,468	31,468	<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	
11. Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions?		✓	<i>For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 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

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

as recorded in minute reference:

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

	Total			vat received	Precept £17260	Bank interest £750	Total ex vat
08/04/2025	£ 921.48	a	hmrc vat	£ 921.48			
22/04/2025	£ 8,630.00	b	precept		£ 8,630.00		£ 8,630.00
02/06/2025	£ 6.75	c	interest			£ 6.75	£ 8,636.75
02/06/2025	£ 62.77	d	interest			£ 62.77	£ 8,699.52
19/09/2025	£ 8,630.00	b	precept		£ 8,630.00		£ 8,630.00
08/09/2025	£ 62.93	c	interest			£ 62.93	£ 8,692.93
08/09/2025	£ 6.76	d	interest			£ 6.76	£ 8,699.69
02/12/2025	£ 55.50	e	interest			£ 55.50	£ 8,755.19
02/12/2025	£ 5.97	f	interest			£ 5.97	£ 8,761.16
02/03/2026	£ 48.29	g	interest			£ 48.29	£ 8,809.45
02/03/2026	£ 5.19	h	interest			£ 5.19	£ 8,814.64
Total	£18,435.64			£ 921.48	£ 17,260.00	£ 254.16	£ 18,435.64

	Budget ref no	DATE	AMOUNT GROSS	REF NO	CHQ NO	SUPPLIER	DESCRIPTION
power							
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	04/04/2025	580.92	1	200925a	J CREE	SALARY
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	04/04/2025	175.88	2	200926	HMRC	APRIL
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	12/03/2025	53.96	3	200927	EXP PLANTING	
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	18	04/04/2025	24	4	200928	PLANTING	
Account & Audit regs 2015 s51 (1) LGA 1972 s111	4	07/04/2025	120	5	200929	RUTELLE	INTERNAL AUDIT
	April	Total	954.76				
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	29/04/2025	330	6	200930	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	25/05/2025	580.72	7	200931	Clerks Salary and exp	May
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	15/05/2025	176.08	8	200932	HMRC May	May
lga 1972 s146a, ss 111, 114 & 143	6	06/05/2025	535.98	9	200993	Zurich Insurance	Insurance
	May	Total	1622.78				
	Overall	Total	2577.54				
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	26/06/2025	580.92	10	200934	Clerks Salary and exp	June
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	26/06/2025	175.88	11	200935	HMRC	June
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	28/05/2025	330	12	200936	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
	June	Total	1086.8				
	Overall	Total	3664.34				
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	26/07/2025	580.92	13	200937	Clerks Salary and exp	June
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	26/07/2025	175.88	14	200938	HMRC	June
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	02/07/2025	330	15	200939	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
lga 1972 s111	7	02/07/2025	440	16	200940	Pineapple printing	posters
	July	Total	1526.8				
	Overall	Total	5191.14				
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	18	04/04/2025	-24	17	200928	PLANTING	
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	26/08/2025	580.92	18	200941	Clerks Salary and exp	June
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	26/08/2025	175.88	19	200943	HMRC	June
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	26/08/2025	270	20	200944	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
L G & Rating Act 1997 s30	18a	10/07/2025	3578.4	21	200942	A and L Contracts	new sid posts
	August	Total	4581.2				
	Overall	Total	9772.34				
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	26/09/2025	614.91	22	200946	Clerks Salary and exp	September
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	26/09/2025	190.87	23	200948	HMRC	September
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	26/09/2025	135	24	200947	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
LA fee/GDPR LGA 1972 s111	19	19/09/2025	52	25	200949	Ico	Annual subs
	September	Total	992.78				
	Overall	Total	10765.12				
L G & Rating Act 1997 s30	18a	01/08/2025	177.6	26	200945	Morelock	Brackets
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	26/09/2025	330	27	200950	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	02/10/2025	586.41	28	200884	Clerks Salary and exp	
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	02/10/2025	178.55	29	200885	HMRC	
lga 1972 s142	13	01/10/2025	156	30	200886	Recoded	
s137 - lga 1972 s137	R	02/10/2025	1422.2	31	200887	UVE Planning	
					200888		
s137 - lga 1972 s137	R	13/10/2025	1800	32	200952-53	Coppice Ecology	
	October	Total	4650.76				
	Overall	Total	15415.88				
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	07/11/2025	586.41	33	200889	Clerks Salary and exp	
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	07/11/2025	178.55	34	200890	HMRC	
lga 1972 s142	13	01/10/2025	16.79	35	200891	Recoded	
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	26/10/2025	330	36	200892	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
	November	Total	1111.75				
	Overall	Total	16527.63				
lga 1972 s142	9	06/11/2025	330	37	200893	Victory Hall	rental
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	01/12/2025	413.44	38	200894	Clerks Salary and exp	December
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	01/12/2025	195	39	200895	B G Services	Grounds maintenance
lga 1972 s142	18	01/12/2025	48	40	200896	SPCA	TRAINING
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	01/12/2025	315.95	41	200897	HMRC	December
			0		200898-99	CANCELLED	
	December	Total	1302.39				
	Overall	Total	17830.02				
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	01/01/2026	413.44	42	200900	Clerks Salary and exp	January
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	01/01/2026	315.95	43	200951	HMRC	January
	January	Total	729.39				
	Overall	Total	18559.41				
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	01/02/2026	520.15	44	200955	Clerks Salary and exp	February
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	01/02/2026	315.95	45	200956	HMRC	February
s137 - lga 1972 s137	R	02/02/2026	381.8	46	200887	UVE Planning	
lga 1972 s142	18	13/02/2026	42	47	200896	SPCA	TRAINING
	February	Total	1259.9				
	Overall	Total	19819.31				
		13/02/2026	939.95	48	200959	Defib Machines	
lga 1972 s112 (2)	1	01/03/2026	449.01	49	200962	Clerks Salary and exp	March
lga 1972 s112 (2)	3	01/03/2026	315.95	50	200961	HMRC	March
Open Spaces OSA 1906s10	7	01/03/2026	966.49	51	200960	Glasdon	New bench
	March	Total	2671.4				
	Overall	Total	22490.71				
2/4/2026	Budget ref no	DATE	AMOUNT GROSS	REF NO	CHQ NO	SUPPLIER	DESCRIPTION

BUDGET COMPARISON FOR LOWER PENN 2025-6 to

	Budget Heading	Budget for 2025-6	Actual Exp	Balance remaining
1	Clerks Salary	£8,424.00	£8,752.70	-£328.70
4	Internal Audit	£150.00	£120.00	£30.00
6	Insurance	£750.00	£535.98	£214.02
7	Grass cutting	£3,000.00	£2,250.00	£750.00
8	Petty Cash	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
9	Hall Hire	£300.00	£330.00	-£30.00
12	Website Maintenance	£60.00	£44.00	£16.00
13	IT Maintenance	£100.00	£100.00	£0.00
14	Defibrillator	£900.00	£783.29	£116.71
15	Election Fees	£2,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00
17	Speed watch	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
18	Parish Misc. items	£600.00	£568.96	£31.04
18a	New sid posts x2	£0.00	£3,130.00	-£3,130.00
18b	New bench	£0.00	£805.41	-£805.41
19	ICO Subscription	£40.00	£52.00	-£12.00
21	EE & Microsoft	£250.00	£426.86	-£176.86
22	New sids x 4	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
23	New noticeboards x3	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
24	3 x planters	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
25	3 x benches	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
26	Residents Communications	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
27	Phone box book swap and work to bus shelter	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
28	Bess Consultant	£0.00	£3,015.00	£0.00
	Totals net of vat	£17,274.00	£20,914.20	-£3,640.20
	Vat to be reclaimed 31/3/26		£1,576.53	
Ref No	Income Precept	Draft budget 2025-6	Actual Inc to 31/03/26	Balance remaining
50	Income Precept	£17,260.00	£17,260.00	£0.00
51	Bank Interest	£750.00	£254.16	-£495.84
	Total income	£18,010.00	£17,514.16	-£495.84
	Vat Return for 31/3/25		£ 921.48	

**SUMMARY OF ASSETS HELD
AS AT 31 MARCH 2026**

Two timber bus shelters	£2,467.00
Chairman's Chain of office/ribbon	£767.00
Laptop	£500.00
Printer/scanner	£100.00
Parish Council notice boards (5)	£4,127.00
Village Signpost	£4,386.00
Bench for village green	£382.00
Fencing for Castlecroft Playing Field	£5,486.00
Community Speedwatch Radar Gun	£1,050.00
Community Speedwatch Radar Gun	£254.00
Projector, carry case & wireless laser pointer	£527.00
4 Road signs and posts	£8,421.00
BT Red Telephone Kiosk	£1.00
Victory Hall Car Park	£0.00
New benches and Planters	£3,000.00
	<u>£31,468.00</u>