



**John Wright
Town Clerk**

Lyme Regis Town Council

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Notice is given of an **extraordinary meeting of Lyme Regis Town Council** to be held at the **Guildhall, Bridge Street, Lyme Regis** on Wednesday 19 June 2024 commencing at **7pm** when the following business is proposed to be transacted:

John Wright
Town Clerk
14.06.24

The open and transparent proceedings of Full Council and committee meetings will be audio recorded and recordings will be held for one year by the town council.

If members of the public make a representation to the meeting, they will be deemed to have consented to being audio recorded.

If members of the public have any queries regarding audio recording of meetings, please contact the town clerk.

Members are reminded that in reaching decisions they should take into consideration the town council's decision to declare a climate emergency and ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030 and beyond.

AGENDA

1. Public Forum

Twenty minutes will be made available for public comment and response in relation to items on this agenda

Individuals will be permitted a maximum of three minutes each to address the committee

2. Apologies for absence

To receive and record any apologies and reasons for absence

3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members are reminded that if they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest on their register of interests relating to any item on the agenda, they are prevented from participating in any discussion or voting on that matter at the meeting as to do so would amount to a criminal offence. Similarly, if you are or become aware of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter under consideration at this meeting which is not on your register of interests or is in the process of being added to your register you must disclose such interest at this meeting and register it within 28 days.

4. Dispensations

To note the grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

5. Internal Audit Report, Visit Two and Three 2023-24

To inform members of the outcome of the internal auditor's second and final visit for 2023-24 and to provide a summary of the number and priority levels of recommendations made to the council over the last five years.

6. Conflicts of Interest

To allow members to consider any conflicts of interest they may have with the council's external auditor BDO LLP for the year ended 31 March 2024

7. Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

To allow members to consider the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (formerly known as the annual return) for the year ended 31 March 2024

8. Co-option

To allow members to consider applications from Sean Larcombe, Malcolm Plant and Rumi Thompson for co-option to the town council

Committee: Full Council

Date: 19 June 2024

Title: Internal Audit Report, Visit Two and Three 2023-24

Purpose of Report

To inform members of the outcome of the internal auditor's second and final visit for 2023-24 and to provide a summary of the number and priority levels of recommendations made to the council over the last five years

Recommendation

- a) Members note the internal auditor's report and approve the management responses
- b) Members note the number and priority levels of recommendations made to the council by the internal auditor 2019-20 to 2023-24

Background

1. Internal audit is an important part of the council's governance and managerial framework and, as such, it is important the town clerk takes responsibility for any observations and recommendations arising from the internal auditor's visits.
2. The council's internal auditor is Darkin Miller – Chartered Accountants. The internal auditor's remit is to establish there is proper book-keeping, risk management arrangements, bank reconciliation and year-end procedures, and controls are in place for payments, budgets, income, petty cash, payroll, and assets.
3. The council normally engages Darkin Miller for eight days a year; this covers four audit visits which usually last for two days.

Report

4. This is the 10th year¹ the council has engaged Darkin Miller and this is its final visit of 2023-24.
5. The second visit, dated 14 May 2024, identifies four recommendations: one high, one medium and two low. Darkin Miller's report is attached, **appendix 5A**.
6. The third and final visit, dated 10 June 2024, identifies five recommendations: two medium and two low. Darkin Miller's report is attached, **appendix 5B**. The report also details all

¹ Darkin Miller has been engaged from 1 April 2023 on a further three-year contract with the option to engage for a further two years, as agreed at Full Council on 14 December 2022

2023-24 recommendations and provides an audit opinion which is detailed in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), which is elsewhere on this agenda.

7. To provide some comparison, below is a summary of the number and priority levels of internal audit recommendations for 2019-20, 2020-21, 2022-23 and 2023-24.

2019-20

Rating	Number			
	Visit 1	Visit 2 & 3	Visit 4	TOTAL
High	4	2	0	6
Medium	4	4	1	9
Low	5	3	2	10
Information	0	0	2	2
TOTAL	13	9	5	27

2020-21

Rating	Number			
	Visit 1	Visit 2 & 3	Visit 4	TOTAL
High	1	0	2	3
Medium	1	1	2	4
Low	6	4	1	11
Information	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	8	5	6	19

2021-22

Rating	Number			
	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	TOTAL
High	0	1	0	1
Medium	3	2	1	6
Low	3	1	2	6
Information	1	0	1	2
TOTAL	7	4	4	15

2022/23

Rating	Number			
	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	TOTAL
High	1	0	1	2
Medium	2	2	1	5
Low	5	4	2	11
Information	0	0	3	3
TOTAL	8	6	7	21

2023-24

Rating	Number				TOTAL
	Visit 1	Visit 2	Car park	Visit 3	
High	0	1	1	0	2
Medium	3	1	4	2	10
Low	3	2	0	3	8
Information	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	7	4	5	5	21

Naomi Cleal
Finance manager
June 2024

DARKIN MILLER ~ CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Accountancy ~ Internal Audit ~ Taxation



FINAL

Internal audit report 2023/24

Visit 2 of 3

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 14th May 2024

Report author: R Darkin-Miller
Email: r.darkin@darkinmiller.co.uk

Darkin Miller Limited trading as Darkin Miller ~ Chartered Accountants
Registered Office: 24e Deverel Road, Charlton Down, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9UD
Principal and Director: Rosie Darkin-Miller LLB (Hons) BFP FCA
Company registered in England no. 8590012

Introduction

This report contains a note of the audit recommendations made to Lyme Regis Town Council following the carrying out of internal audit testing on site on the 25th and 27th March 2024 with later work carried out remotely.

The audit work has been carried out in accordance with Appendix 9 of the 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide', as supplemented by the requirements of later AGARs.

An internal audit covers the review of the operation of the Council's internal control environment. It is not designed to review and give full assurance over every transaction carried out by the Council. Instead it enables the auditor, following the sample testing of a number of different types of transaction, to give an opinion as to whether or not the control objectives are being achieved across a range of financial and governance systems.

Audit Opinion

As this audit report is an interim one, no audit opinion is offered at this stage. The report issued after the final visit for 2023/24 (which will be in May or June 2024) will contain the audit opinion.

The following areas were reviewed during this audit visit:

1. Risk Management
2. Budgetary Control
3. Income
4. Publication (completion)

Audit Recommendations

Recommendations made during the audit are shown in appendix one to this report.

Recommendations are graded as follows:

Rating	Significance
High	Either a critical business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is substantial non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Medium	Either a key business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is a degree of non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Low	Either minor non-conformity with procedure or opportunity to improve working practices further.

The number of recommendations made at this audit visit and their priority are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number
High	1
Medium	1
Low	2
Info	0
TOTAL	4

I would like to thank John Wright, Town Clerk; Mark Green, Deputy Town Clerk; Naomi Cleal, Finance Manager; Adrienne Mullins, Support Service Manager; and Marr Adamson-Drage, Operations Manager, for their assistance during this audit.

Darkin Miller ~ Chartered Accountants
2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT OF LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
FINAL REPORT VISIT 2 OF 3: 14th MAY 2024

Appendix 1 – Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation number	Detail	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Management Response	Responsible Officer	Due Date
3.2 – Amend and sign minutes	<p>I reviewed the minutes to confirm that there was no unusual financial activity. I found no such activity, but did note that:</p> <p><u>Council</u> Minute 23/124/C of the meeting of 13/12/23 refers in error to the TMH meeting of 09/11/23 (the meeting was on 08/11/23) Minutes 23/151/C of the meeting of 07/02/24 refers in error to a recommendation to Council, but as this was a Council meeting there should be a resolution</p> <p><u>HR Committee</u> Minutes of the meeting of 13/09/23 have not been signed. The minutes of 01/11/23 have only been signed on the first page.</p> <p>I recommend that the errors are amended and the approved minutes signed or initialled on each page in order to ensure that an accurate record of approved Council business and decisions is held.</p>	L	Annotations will be made in the margins of the minutes concerned and any unsigned minutes will be signed.	SSM	31/07/2024
5.2 – Introduce application forms for	<p>I checked a sample of income to confirm that it was properly recorded and promptly banked. I found that the Council's income related to cemeteries (purchase of graves, interments, and memorials) are recorded in the</p>	H	Agreed	SSM	30/06/2024

cemetery services	<p>relevant register, but that no formal application form exists or is processed. An application form would enable the Council to clearly set out in writing the scope of the service being provided, and the price to be charged, which would provide a degree of protection in the event of dispute. The application form also supports the registers, in the event that those primary documents are damaged.</p> <p>I recommend that the Council puts application forms in place in relation to cemetery services, in order to ensure that the service being requested by customers, the price being charged, and any related terms or conditions, are clearly set out in writing on a form signed by the applicant. This will reduce the risk of fraud and error.</p>				
5.3 – Set up default codes for customers, and recode miscoded income	<p>I found that a small amount of car park income (£19.00) had been coded to Monmouth Beach Day Huts in error. The Finance Manager explained that the MB Day Hut code is the default code used when setting up new customer invoices. The Finance Manager routinely reminds staff and checks the code when carrying out reconciliations to recode any miscoded income, and confirmed that the Council is now setting up default codes for individuals, which should further reduce the risk of error.</p> <p>I recommend that miscoded income is transferred, and that default codes are set up for all customer accounts as planned in order to reduce the risk of fraud and error.</p>	L	Agreed	FM	30/06/2024
14.1 – Ensure evidence retained to	I checked to see that the Council complied with the publication requirements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The Council was required to	M	Noted and will action every year.	SSM/FM	30/07/24

<p>support date of publication and removal of required documents</p>	<p>publish the public rights notice and ss1&2 of the unaudited AGAR before 01/07/23. The Council provided evidence that a change was made to the Finance pages of the website on 30/06/23, but this did not show what had been changed. The relevant documentation had been removed from the website by the date of the first audit visit on 04/12/23 so it was not possible to confirm that the Public Rights information remain on the website for the public rights period. The Council provided evidence that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and ss1-3 of the audited AGAR were published on 28/09/23. These remain on the website.</p> <p>I recommend that additional evidence is retained in future to prove that the Public Rights documentation was published within deadline, and that it remained on the website for the required duration.</p>				
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DARKIN MILLER ~ CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Accountancy ~ Internal Audit ~ Taxation



FINAL

Internal audit report 2023/24

Visit 3 of 3

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 10th June 2024

Report author: R Darkin-Miller
Email: r.darkin@darkinmiller.co.uk

Darkin Miller Limited trading as Darkin Miller ~ Chartered Accountants
Registered Office: 24e Deverel Road, Charlton Down, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9UD
Principal and Director: Rosie Darkin-Miller LLB (Hons) BFP FCA
Company registered in England no. 8590012

Introduction

This report contains a note of the audit recommendations made to Lyme Regis Town Council following the carrying out of internal audit testing on site with some remote testing on the 5th and 6th June 2024.

The audit work has been carried out in accordance with Appendix 9 of the 2014 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide', as amended by the requirements later AGARs.

An internal audit covers the review of the operation of the Council's internal control environment. It is not designed to review and give full assurance over every transaction carried out by the Council. Instead it enables the auditor, following the sample testing of a number of different types of transaction, to give an opinion as to whether or not the control objectives are being achieved across a range of financial and governance systems.

Audit Opinion

Based on the sample testing carried out at this final audit visit and during the year, all of the Council's current financial controls appear to be operating effectively with the exception of:

Test N: Publication

I checked to see that the Council complied with the publication requirements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The Council was required to publish the public rights notice and ss1&2 of the unaudited AGAR before 01/07/23. The Council provided evidence that a change was made to the Finance pages of the website on 30/06/23, but this did not show what had been changed. The relevant documentation had been removed from the website by the date of the first audit visit on 04/12/23 so it was not possible to confirm that the Public Rights information remain on the website for the public rights period. The Council provided evidence that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and ss1-3 of the audited AGAR were published on 28/09/23. These remain on the website.

Evidence indicates but does not prove that the Council complied with the publication requirements. Consequently I have assessed the test as 'not covered'.

Audit Recommendations

Recommendations made during the audit are shown in appendix one to this report. Recommendations are graded as follows:

Rating	Significance
High	Either a critical business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is substantial non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Medium	Either a key business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is a degree of non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Low	Either minor non-conformity with procedure or opportunity to improve working practices further.

The number of recommendations made at this audit visit and their priority are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number
High	0
Medium	2
Low	3
Info	0
TOTAL	5

The number of recommendations made at all of the audit visits in 2023/24 and their priorities are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number				
	Visit 1	Visit 2	Car park	Visit 3	TOTAL
High	0	1	1	0	2
Medium	3	1	4	2	10
Low	3	2	0	3	8
Information	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	7	4	5	5	21

I would like to thank Naomi Cleal – Finance Manager; Mark Green – Deputy Town Clerk; and Adrienne Mullins – Support Services Manager for their assistance during this audit.

Darkin Miller ~ Chartered Accountants
2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT OF LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
FINAL REPORT VISIT 3 OF 3: 10th JUNE 2024

Appendix 1 – Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation number	Detail	Priority (Low/ Medium/ High)	Management Response	Responsible Officer	Due Date
3.3 – Ensure all approved minutes are published on the website	<p>I reviewed the minutes to confirm that there was no unusual financial activity. I found no such activity, but did note that the following minutes had been approved but were not showing on the Council's website at 05/06/24:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council 27/03/24 2. Strategy & Finance Committee 06/03/24 3. Human Resources 27/03/24 4. Tourism, Community & Publicity 21/02/24 <p>I recommend that the minutes are added to the website in order to comply with Transparency best practice.</p>	L	Agreed	SSM	30/06/2024
5.4 – Ensure all income collected	<p>I checked to see that a sample of income was properly recorded and promptly banked. I found that 28/32 either paid promptly, took longer to pay but did pay within the year, or are on an agreed instalment plan. 1/32 is on instalments but currently in arrears. 3/32 have not paid: 1 was due to the cancellation of a parking fine as the customer was a permit holder with a lapsed permit who renewed the permit after the fine was levied, the second because the parking fine was levied on a vehicle registered in a foreign country, and the third because of a dispute over the amount charged. The Finance Manager noted that there will be further discussions as regards the disputed historic charges in order to recover the monies owed, and that action continues</p>	L	Agreed. Parking debt management to be reviewed.	FM/OM	31/07/2024

	<p>to recover other debts.</p> <p>I recommend that the active management of debt continues as planned in order to ensure that all monies due to the Council are collected.</p>				
5.5 – Ensure amount charged is as per lease	<p>I checked to see that a sample of income was properly recorded and promptly banked. I found that the majority of charges agreed with those set by Council, but that the amount charged for one lease was based on the annual amount divided by 12, which (after rounding) gives an amount 8p lower than the full amount due per the lease.</p> <p>I recommend that amount due per the lease is charged in future years in order to ensure that prices charged agree with those set by the Council.</p>	L	Agreed. Future invoice has been raised at the annual lease rate, rather than monthly amount.	FM/DTC	Complete
5.6 – Improve audit trail and reporting for car park penalty fine cancellations, and reduce the number of cancellations relating to pre-booking errors	<p>I tested three samples of income related to car park fines. A discounted amount was received in respect of one fine paid early, one was not collectable as the vehicle was registered to a foreign country, and the third was cancelled. Parking fine cancellation is managed by the Operations Manager, who has delegated the ability to review and cancel fines to front desk staff.</p> <p>There is a note on the enforcement record that the parking permit payment had been outstanding but was now paid, but the note does not state the date of payment of the permit not the permit number, which weakens the audit trail. The Finance Manager noted that sometimes the notes pages are not fully completed with the reason or evidence to support the cancellation.</p>	M	Agreed.	OP	30/06/2024

	<p>The Finance Manager noted that there were a number of cancellations in year relating to pre-booked spaces. There is a car park space in Lyme Regis listed on Just Park with a similar name to one of the Council car parks. Service users have been booking a prepaid space there by accident, then parking in the Council's car park, receiving a fine for an unpaid ticket, and then complaining to the Council and asking to pay only the parking charge that they should have paid instead of the fine levied. There is a significant administrative burden associated with managing these complaints.</p> <p>There is currently no formal review of the number and reasons for parking fine cancellations. Zatpark, the software provider, noted that it is possible to create a set of bespoke reasons for cancellation on a drop-down menu, which would allow the Council to run a management report periodically to show the numbers of cancellations by type. This would enable Management to take action to address common issues in order to minimise the number of cancellations that are required.</p> <p>I recommend that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The notes pages are fully completed for all cancellations to include the reason for the cancellation plus any additional details or evidence to improve the audit trail (e.g. the permit number and payment date for renewed permits); 2. The Council sets up common cancellation reasons for use in the drop-down menu, and that each cancellation is classified by type 				
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	<p>3. A cancellation report is run and reviewed monthly, which action taken to address any common cancellation reasons which can be eliminated</p> <p>4. Just Park are asked to amend the name on the car park site which is similar to the Council's car park name and which is responsible for the booking error suffered by a number of car park users.</p> <p>This should help to reduce the number of fines being cancelled, and improve the audit trail for parking fine cancellations.</p>				
9.1 – Ensure bank statement received for final account	<p>I checked to see that there was a bank reconciliation for each account and that the reconciliation was performed regularly. I noted that all of the Council bank accounts were reconciled to 31/03/24 apart from a small account (under £550) relating to the Wilkinson Legacy, for which a bank statement is only received once a year. During the financial year, the bank notified the Council that it was withdrawing paper statements. The only signatory on the account has refused to set up online banking, which means that the Council will need to file an additional application with the bank to change the signatories in order to set up online banking and obtain a year-end statement. The most recent statement showed the balance as at 01/01/23, at which point 50p of interest had been added to the balance at bank on 01/01/22. This means that the balance at bank, and the total of bank interest, is slightly understated at the year-end.</p> <p>I recommend that the bank statement is obtained as planned in order to ensure that up to date bank reconciliations can be prepared for all bank accounts.</p>	M	Motion in process currently to change signatories on the bank account, which will give us access to the bank's records.	FM	31/07/2024

Committee: Extraordinary Full Council

Date: 19 June 2024

Title: Conflicts of Interest

Purpose of Report

To allow members to consider any conflicts of interest they may have with the council's external auditor BDO LLP for the year ended 31 March 2024

Recommendation

Members consider whether there are any conflicts of interest with BDO LLP for the year ended 31 March 2024 and authorise the mayor and town clerk to sign the conflict of interest form on behalf of the council.

Background

1. Full Council resolved on 12 December 2022 to approve Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments LTD to organise the council's external audit contract and they appointed BDO LLP as the town council's external auditors for years 2022-23 – 2026-27.

Report

2. The form at **appendix 6A** allows the council to confirm whether there are any conflicts of interest which would undermine BDO's ability to act as the council's external auditor or if a conflict arises.
3. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) must be approved by the Full Council and submitted to our external auditors no later than 1 July 2024 along with all supporting documents.
4. The AGAR for the year ended 31 March 2024 is presented elsewhere on this agenda.

Naomi Cleal
Finance manager
June 2024

CONFLICT OF INTEREST WITH BDO LLP

To be completed annually and minuted at a meeting of the smaller authority.

Name of Smaller Authority	
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I confirm that there are no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.

I confirm the following conflicts of interest (please detail below:

This was confirmed and minuted at the following meeting:

Date of Meeting	Minute Reference

Signed (Clerk/RFO)

Print Name

Signed (Chair)

Print Name

Committee: Full Council

Date: 19 June 2024

Title: Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Purpose of Report

To allow members to consider the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (formerly known as the annual return) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Recommendation

The council approves the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024 and authorises the mayor and town clerk to authorise and sign the document on behalf of the council

Background

1. Local councils in England with an annual turnover of £6.5 million or less must complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return, **appendix 7A**, in accordance with proper practices summarising their activities at the end of each financial year.
2. In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the notice to electors to allow the exercise of public rights to inspect the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 must be posted before 1 July 2024.
3. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return must be approved by the Full Council and submitted to our external auditors before 1 July 2024.
4. If the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is approved and/or submitted to the council's external auditor after 1 July 2024, a qualified audit opinion will be issued.
5. Failure to approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and submit it to the external auditors, along with all the required supporting documentation, by 1 July 2024 will result in a Public Interest Report (PIR) being issued.
6. A PIR is issued by the external auditor under Section 8 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and reports any matters which should be given formal consideration by the local council or brought to the attention of the public. This could damage the council's reputation, affect its ability to receive external funding, or count against it in achieving external accreditation.

7. The attached return for 2023-24 consists of four sections: the annual internal audit report, annual governance statement, accounting statements and the external auditor certificate and opinion.
8. Following a Strategy and Finance Committee recommendation on 30 November 2022, Full Council resolved on 12 December 2022 to approve Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments LTD to organise the council's external audit contract and they appointed BDO LLP as the town council's external auditors for years 2022-23 – 2026-27.

Report

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023-24

9. This report is based on independent opinion, an assessment of risk, and a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls.
10. The report's objective is to ascertain if:
 - accounts have been kept properly
 - financial regulations have been complied with
 - risks have been assessed and reviewed
 - precept requirements resulted from an adequate budgetary process, budgets monitored, and reserves held at an appropriate level
 - expected income has been received, accounted for, banked and VAT has been accounted for
 - petty cash is properly accounted for
 - salaries, allowances, PAYE and NI requirements are met
 - asset and investment register is completed and maintained
 - periodic and bank reconciliations are carried out
 - accounting statements have been correctly prepared.

Annual Governance Statement 2023-24

11. This section extends beyond the accounting statement and asks members to confirm to the best of their knowledge and believe that:
 - effective arrangements are in place for effective financial management and the preparation of accounting statements;
 - there are adequate systems of internal control
 - relevant laws, regulation and codes of practice are being complied with
 - there are proper opportunities for electors to exercise their rights
 - risks are assessed and controlled
 - internal audit arrangements are in place
 - appropriate actions are taken in response to internal and external auditor recommendations
 - exposures with a financial impact are included in accounting statements.

Accounting Statements 2023-24

12. This section details the accounting statement for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2024, drawing comparison with the accounting statement for the previous financial year.

External Auditor Certificate and Opinion 2023-24

13. The approved accounts are referred to the council's external auditors, BDO LLP; these accounts must be with the external auditor before 1 July 2024.
14. BDO will review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and supporting information and report on any matters that give them cause for concern in respect of any relevant legislation or regulatory requirements that have not been met.
15. The external audit must be completed by 30 September 2024; otherwise, a qualified opinion will be issued. The external auditor's certificate and opinion must be reported to the council and put on public display.

Naomi Cleal
Finance manager
June 2024

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - **The Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

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 Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *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 and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- 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.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- 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 as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **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.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days 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 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
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', has an explanation been published?		
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 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

**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

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Lyme Regis Town Council

www.lymeregistowncouncil.gov.uk

WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 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 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes). <i>SEE ATTACHED NOTE</i>			✓
O. (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 *SEE ATTACHED NOTE*

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Mrs R Darkin-Miller LLB(Hons) BFP FCA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date 06/06/2024

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Internal Auditor note on test N:

I checked to see that the Council complied with the publication requirements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The Council was required to publish the public rights notice and ss1&2 of the unaudited AGAR before 01/07/23. The Council provided evidence that a change was made to the Finance pages of the website on 30/06/23, but this did not show what had been changed. The relevant documentation had been removed from the website by the date of the first audit visit on 04/12/23 so it was not possible to confirm that the Public Rights information remain on the website for the public rights period. The Council provided evidence that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and ss1-3 of the audited AGAR were published on 28/09/23. These remain on the website.

Evidence indicates but does not prove that the Council complied with the publication requirements. Consequently I have assessed the test as 'not covered'.

Dates internal audit undertaken:

04/12/2023	06/12/023	02/02/2024	22/02/2024	01/03/2024	25/03/2024
28/03/2024	05/06/2024				



R Darkin-Miller LLB (Hons) BFP FCA 06/06/2024

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

£ Lyme Regis Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

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

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

www.lymeregistowncouncil.gov.uk AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

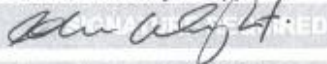
Lyme Regis Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,127,816	1,540,306	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	132,779	132,779	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,936,831	2,191,159	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	782,005	920,526	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	875,116	1,013,361	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	1,540,306	1,930,357	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	1,634,954	2,047,243	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	8,026,639	8,068,444	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings			The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval


Date 12/06/2024

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

Elyme Regis Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

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

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

Committee: Full Council

Date: 19 June 2024

Title: Co-option

Purpose of Report

To allow members to consider applications from Sean Larcombe, Malcolm Plant and Rumi Thompson for co-option to the town council

Recommendation

Members consider applications from Sean Larcombe, Malcolm Plant and Rumi Thompson for co-option to the town council and make an appointment

Background

1. On 8 April 2024, the town clerk was informed by Dorset Council's democratic and electoral services team that the necessary number of nominations for a contested election on 2 May 2024 had not been achieved, i.e., 13 nominations were received for 14 seats.
2. In an election year, it is permissible to co-opt one or more councillors without statutory notice, as long as the co-option is within 35 working days of the election date, i.e., 22 June 2024.
3. At the Annual Meeting of the Council on 15 May 2024, members received a report on co-option and approved the interview and voting processes; these are detailed in paragraphs 8 to 18.

Report

4. On 6 May 2024, a public notice was issue for the co-option of a councillor and applications were received from Sean Larcombe, Malcolm Plant and Rumi Thompson on or before the closing date of 12noon, Friday 7 June 2024.
5. The public notice asked applicants to submit statements supporting their applications, these are attached:

Sean Larcombe, **appendix 8A**
Malcolm Plant, **appendix 8B**
Rumi Thompson, **appendix 8C**
6. Candidates have been informed of the qualification and disqualification criteria and have confirmed that they are eligible to stand. Candidates have also been informed about the interview and voting processes.

7. Officers have checked and can confirm all proposers and seconders are on the electoral register.

The interview process

8. Each candidate will give a five-minute presentation to elaborate on why they are seeking co-option and to detail the experience and skills they can bring to the council.
9. After each candidate has made their presentation, members can ask questions.
10. When the presentations and questions are complete, the council will go straight to a vote in open session to select a candidate who can command an absolute majority of votes; there will be no discussion about the candidates in either open or exempt business.

The voting process

11. The purpose of the voting process is to create a position where one candidate has a majority of the votes cast by members present at the meeting². For ease of explanation, the process refers to a scenario where five candidates have applied for co-option and 13 members are present at the meeting.
12. Members cast a single vote for their preferred candidate in one or more rounds of voting. The purpose of each voting round is to eliminate the candidate with the fewest number of votes.
13. At any stage in the process, if one or more candidates receives no votes, they will be eliminated.
14. If more than one candidate has the lowest number of votes, e.g., in the first round of voting candidate A has 4 votes, candidate B has 3 votes, candidate C has 2 votes, candidate D has 2 votes and candidate E has 2 votes, then candidates A and B will go through to the next round and a further vote will take place between candidates C, D and E to establish who has the lowest number of votes. In this instance up to 13 votes will be divided among three candidates.
15. It is possible that a second vote at this, or any, stage of the process may not produce a candidate for elimination, i.e., two candidates could tie with the lowest number of votes (7:3:3) or, if one member abstains, the three remaining candidates could receive the same number of votes (4:4:4).
16. In the first instance, the candidate with the highest number of votes would go through to the next stage of the process and a further round of voting would take place between the two remaining candidates. If there was a further tie, (6:6) the mayor would exercise his casting vote in favour of his preferred candidate and the other candidate would be eliminated.
17. In the second instance, the mayor would exercise his casting vote in favour of a candidate and a further vote would be held between the remaining two candidates.

² Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 39

18. The process will repeat itself until one candidate has a majority of the votes cast by members present at the meeting. If this process produces a tie between two final candidates, the mayor will exercise his casting vote.

John Wright
Town clerk
June 2024

Some people here on the council will know me already, for those that don't:-

My name is Sean Larcombe, I'm married with three children and currently live in Lyme Regis. I grew up in Charmouth and went to school at Woodroffe. I left Charmouth in 1983 and went to Weymouth then Bournemouth where I went to college to study a chefs diploma. From Bournemouth I started to travel around the world on a shoestring with just a rucksack on my back, returning to Bournemouth in between travels.

I came back to west Dorset in 2003 with my eldest daughter and managed to secure accommodation through the local authority in 2005, whereby my daughter went to St. Michael's C of E school in Kingsway. I met my wife in 2007 and married in 2013 and we are still together with two more children.

I would like to be considered for a position on Lyme Regis town council, serving the people of Lyme Regis. I understand it's a very fine line juggling between pleasing Lyme residents and looking after the tourist industry, which seaside towns rely heavily on throughout the summer season.

But as a council, we should listen to the people who live here throughout the year as well as trying to address the needs of visitors who come back year after year. As a council we are not going to get it right every time, sometimes there a need to revisit issues and if necessary do a U turn. This should be taken as a learning curve You won't please all the people all the time, but if you can please majority some of the time you (one) won't be doing a bad job.

Sometimes you, as a representative of the people, will get adverse attention. By no means should you take this personally, the council is run as a body, not an individual, but one person can make a difference.



I am writing to express my interest in being considered for the role of Town Councillor.

As a resident of Lyme Regis living with my wife Dolores and our dog Jack I am committed to contributing my skills, passion, and energy to help support the community and the future of our town.

In my experience Lyme Regis not only offers amazing scenery, gardens a range of clubs and activities but perhaps most importantly welcoming people.

I am extremely passionate about the environment and will actively support initiatives. Prior to retirement I worked within the Sainsbury's Engineering team where environmental issues were uppermost on the agenda.

I consider myself a good listener and will actively seek feedback, listen to concerns, and work towards inclusive policies for all ages.

I believe in supporting local businesses and attracting new investments. A thriving economy benefits us all.

Lyme Regis is already a wonderful place to live and visit but Lyme is changing as it continues to attract families, couples, seniors and investment in the town and deal with changing environmental issues and I would like to be a part of that journey.

Whether a newcomer or someone born and bred in Lyme, I believe we should all be equally valued and included in our contribution to the betterment of Lyme Regis.

I feel very privileged to live in such a beautiful part of the country and I am keen to serve the town and its community to the best of my ability.

Malcolm Plant

I have lived in Lyme Regis for a large part of my adolescence. Now in my twenties I would like to play a role in making sure the town capitalises on the unique community and natural beauty that can be found here. I have since witnessed the predictable exodus of younger people from the area. This is obviously due to a complex set of circumstances. However, I feel like it is important that the insight of a younger adult who lives in the town is represented on the council.

I am organised, disciplined and a very good listener. I was Deputy Head Boy at The Woodroffe School, finishing my studies in 2018. I am, despite my age, a realist and understand the importance of setting short term achievable goals. I would work to retain (and in some cases re-establish) key amenities that the local community depends upon. I also believe that Lyme Regis is well placed to become more of a regional gastronomic hub and invite a crowd of people who are keen to enjoy live music and community led events in the many pubs across the town. The Ship pub on Coombe Street has set a great precedent in this regard - becoming a place for under 40s to gather in a friendly, communal atmosphere.

If this council feels like my inclusion is beneficial, I would be very grateful of the opportunity to take part and do my bit.

Many thanks,

Rumi Thompson