Roydon Parish Council

https://roydon-southnorfolk-pc.gov.uk

Notice is hereby given that you are summoned by the Clerk to attend the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Roydon Parish Council which will be held at the Parish Room at St Remigius Church, Roydon on Tuesday 25th June 2024 at 7.00pm

Members :	**Paul Curson (Chair)**	**Stephen Finch (Vice Chair)**
	Keith Best	**Angela Brown**
	Trevor Ault	**Andrew Daniels**
	Jane Jennifer	**Elizabeth Taylor**
	George Waterman	

Signed: Emma Chandler - Parish Clerk **Date: 20th June 2024**

Members of the press and public are welcome to attend - there will be an opportunity for public participation at agenda item 4

Agenda

1. Welcome

2. To receive and consider accepting apologies from members unable to attend.

3. To receive and note any declarations of members' pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary/other interests pertaining to items on the following agenda, to note any dispensations granted in respect of business to be discussed and to consider any requests for dispensations.

4. Public Forum: To receive County & District Councillors reports and the opportunity for issues to be raised or questions asked.

5. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
   a. Monday 20th May 2024 (copy herewith)
   b. Tuesday 28th May 2024 (copy herewith)

6. Matters arising - To note progress on decisions made at the last meeting (for information only and not on current agenda).

7. Financial Matters and Banking
   a) To note the Bank Balances and Bank Reconciliation as of 19th June 2024(Copy herewith)
   b) Receipts noted and payments to be noted/authorised. (Copy herewith)
   c) Receive the first Quarter financial report.

8. To receive and review the Internal Auditors Report (Mr T Brown) for year ending 2023/24 and formulate and agree any recommendations (copy herewith)

9. Presentation of the 2023/2024 End of Year Finance report
   a) To receive and note the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 Form 3 (copy herewith – whole document)
   b) To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report (AGAR) completed by Mr T Brown for 2023/24 (at meeting)

c) To complete the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 Section 1 and approve. Both the Chairman and the Clerk to sign the hard copy
d) To receive the Accounting Statements 2023/24 Section 2 and approve. Both the Chairman and the RFO to sign the hard copy.

10. To agree the final submission document for the Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Consultation.

11. To receive a draft meeting calendar for the 24-25 year and agree dates

12. To consider the five year electrical testing proposal from TT Jones (Current Contractor for Street Lights) and agree next steps

13. Brewers Green Update

14. DDNP Update

15. Big Green Week – Debrief.

16. To consider information or issues relevant to Council from members for brief discussion and inclusion on a future agenda

17. Date & Time of Next Meetings: To confirm the date of Tuesday 27th August 2024 for the Annual Parish Council meeting.

Emma Chandler, Parish Clerk & RFO
Email clerk@roydon-southnorfolk-pc.gov.uk Telephone: 07707 495297

Roydon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall, Roydon, on Monday 20th May 2023 at 7.30pm

Councillors Present – Trevor Ault (Chair), Stephen Finch (Vice Chair), Angela Brown, Paul Curson, Andrew Daniels, Jane Jennifer, Elizabeth Taylor.

In Attendance – Emma Chandler (Parish Clerk)

Public – 68 members of the public present.

1. **Welcome**

Cllr Ault welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **To receive and consider accepting apologies from members unable to attend.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Best and District Cllrs Minshull and Murphy

3. **Open Forum to gather feedback from the community regarding the National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Consultation**

Cllr Ault opened the forum by giving background on the plans so far. He explained that to date two informal consultations had taken place and this was the third, final and official consultation that will take place.

The following points were gathered during the session.

- NG must consult on alternatives to its plan, an offshore grid and more undergrounding. These alternatives have not been presented in the same way as the current pylon plan so not possible for public to compare (transparency issues / democratic?).

- Roydon wants a pause in the process to give time to properly evaluate other options. Essex County Council, on behalf of Norfolk and Suffolk CCs, commissioned consultant Andy Hiorns to produce a report into the need for the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. The report concluded that the proposals were premature and would not be needed until the mid-2030s.

- Roydon wants pause for transparent and effective evaluation of the offshore option, which would be the best environmentally and socially for the parish. An assessment should also be carried out into high voltage direct current undergrounding throughout, this being considered the second best option. HVDC exists, is less damaging and technological advances are happening at pace so making it more realistic option.

- Pylons are 100-year-old technology. NG accepts the harm they do to landscapes - they are removing them in various parts of the country and undergrounding as an alternative. What is different about East Anglia?

- Roydon opposes the plan as it stands for pylons / partial undergrounding through the parish because of the harm it would do.

- Harm to the Waveney Valley would be severe from a string of pylons. The valley is described by Suffolk Wildlife trust as "part of a chain of fens that are strung like jewels along the Suffolk and Norfolk border". On this wildlife corridor there are bat roosts, as well as schedule 1 protected bird species such as the barn owl, heron and swifts. These are rare ancient peatland water meadows. According to the wildlife trusts such water meadows are rapidly declining in this country. Indeed, Suffolk Wildlife Trust have recently embarked upon a long term project, with the support of government funding, to connect and improve the river valley between Diss and the Little Ouse, part of which is this stretch of the Waveney Valley (Recovering Nature in the Headwaters of the Little Ouse and Waveney Rivers | Suffolk Wildlife Trust). Pylons would be significant visual intrusion and compromise the nature recovery project.

- The partial underground cabling and pylons option through the Waveney Valley would also be hugely damaging to the environment. While undergrounding would take away the visual impact of pylons, where undergrounding starts (by the A1066 near to Hall Lane) and ends (on the other side of the valley near Palgrave) there would need to be large CSE compounds with associated security apparatus and access. These would be visually intrusive and completely out of keeping with the area - almost as much as the pylons would be. This would only be acceptable if the undergrounding was extended much further to the north and south. NEED TO CHECK CSE specs

- Snow Street alone has 11 listed buildings whose settings would be visually impacted by the pylons to the north of the village. These are heritage assets that are integral to the character of the village. Extending underground from the Waveney Valley beyond the section north of Snow Street is essential to protect the character of the village.

- Has NG assessed the impact of HGV traffic and construction activity on these listed properties (vibration etc)? Many don't have much in the way of foundations.

- Concern about National Grid's secretive purchase of Gables Farm, a listed building, on Darrow Lane in Roydon, and what their plans are for it and the land. Why was this purchased? Was it as compensation to the owners? Is the purchase price part of the costings of the project?

- In May 2024 the Energy Secretary Claire Coutinho said "our energy security must not come at the expense of our food security" when announcing limitations on solar farms on best quality farmland. In Roydon quality farmland will be lost and compromised by infrastructure and the build. What applies to solar farms should apply to Norwich to Tilbury.

- The pylon route around Roydon involves a number of sharp turns in contravention of Holford Rule 3. This rule seeks to ensure fewer angle towers. The rule also seeks to ensure inconspicuous locations for angle towers, but this is a flat landscape, and towers would be visually intrusive.

- Diss and Roydon would be enclosed in a ring of pylons. Plus, new plans are being laid for another line through Norfolk from Lincolnshire. How many more pylons will there be?

- Concern for residents' mental health / stress as a result of the environmental damage the scheme will cause and build process. Has this been costed into NG calculations or considered? At least one elderly resident says she is scared to object to NG plans because she fears her electricity will be cut off. Another won't go in her garden anymore because it reminds her of the damage pylons will do to her view.

- The Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan, which was adopted after a referendum in 2023, designates Key Views in Roydon, two of which are severely affected by the proposed pylons route. These views chosen by the public. Important for sense of place. Key View 28, looking all around from the middle of Darrow Lane (to the north of Snow Street). This view devastated by 50m high pylons. Public footpaths 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be impacted by temporary closure and permanent visual impact and proximity of pylons These are important for hikers and dog-walkers - both locals and visitors to the area.

- Key View 25, looking from the churchyard south across the Waveney Valley, would be similarly and permanently compromised by pylons.

- The setting of Grade I Listed St Remegius Church in Roydon would be permanently compromised by the pylons.

- The Diss Beacon of Hope project, launched to commemorate those lost in the Covid 19 epidemic, introduced the Diss Beacon Cycle Route. This will be impacted by road closures and disruption during the build and also by the resulting visually intrusive pylons.

- Many of the roads in our area are completely inadequate for NG construction traffic, including HGVs. Some are single-lane, others with blind turns, most have no pavements so pedestrians must walk in the road. Planning applications have been rejected on county highways advice because of the increase in HGVs they would cause in the area and the effect on road safety and structure (Eg Deal Farm).

- Damaging both visually and through the build process to Fox Wood Forest School on Snow Street. This was developed to support physical and mental wellbeing through time in nature, adventurous play and connection with others; to encourage children and families to connect with nature through play and exploration, so that they might be the ones to protect it in future; to create a haven for wildlife.

- Damaging visually and build to Heron Meadow, which uses nature and wildlife for wellbeing, healing and learning on Doit Lane, Roydon.

- Local businesses blighted by the build for years (if they survive). Much effort has been put into boosting tourism in this part of the Waveney Valley, of encouraging visitors to enjoy the nature of Roydon Fen, Wortham Ling, the river itself and other green spaces, as well as Bressingham Gardens and Steam Museum. Build will seriously impact ability to use / visit these and the infrastructure will put off future visitors. Has this damage to the local economy been costed into NG plans?

- A joint Suffolk Norfolk CC Valued Landscape assessment noted that "the length of the Waveney Valley expresses many special qualities, and in the context of Suffolk and Norfolk, it is considered to be a valued landscape. Conserving and enhancing the special qualities articulated in this report is a key aspiration of existing planning policy." Pylons would devastate that landscape.

- Denis Henshaw, a retired professor of human radiation effects at the University of Bristol, said high-voltage cables were linked "beyond reasonable doubt" to leukaemia and other cancers. Further studies by Bristol University's oncology department supported this view. There is great concern among residents about this. NG deny it (but they would and point to other surveys that contradict Bristol). However, if there is doubt, is it right to put people at risk? Similarly, a resident with epilepsy raised serious concern about the impact of electro-magnetic waves on her condition.

- Residents will not be bribed by so-called community benefits offered as some form of compensation. A new playground here or a bit off an energy bill there does not make up for the huge damage pylons will do to peoples' lives and the environment.

- The energy being generated is being taken to London and the southeast. East Anglia won't benefit from it but will be permanent scarred by the project (and others that are planned or on the way. Those regions should be paying the additional cost of offshoring.

- Pylons would be just yards from people's homes especially between Roydon and Bressingham.

The points raised are to be collated by Cllr Finch, Cllr Jennifer and the Clerk before a draft submission is complied by Cllr Curson for approval at the next Parish Council meeting.

Meeting ended at 21.37.

Roydon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Parish Room, St Remigius Church, Roydon, on Tuesday 28th May 2023 at 7.00pm

Councillors Present – Trevor Ault (Chair), Stephen Finch (Vice Chair), Angela Brown, Paul Curson, Andrew Daniels, Jane Jennifer, Keith Best, Elizabeth Taylor.

In Attendance – Emma Chandler (Parish Clerk)

Public – four members of the public

1. **Election of Chair of the Parish Council**
   Cllr Jennifer nominated Cllr Curson for the position of Chair.
   Cllr Ault seconded the nomination.
   Unanimously agreed.
   Declaration was signed by Cllr Curson and the Parish Clerk

2. **Election of Vice Chair of the Parish Council**
   Cllr Ault nominated Cllr Finch for the position of Vice Chair.
   Cllr Best seconded the nomination.
   Unanimously agreed.

3. **Co-option**
   a) New candidate to introduce themselves to Members and explain why they seek to become a Member of the Council. (This introduction should be informal and should not exceed 5 minutes).
   Mr George Waterman introduced himself to the council. He gave a short but detailed brief about his experience and reasons for wanting to join the Parish Council and then invited questions.
   b) Existing Councillors are allowed a maximum of ten minutes to ask prospective candidates any clarification questions.
   Following his comprehensive brief councillors only expressed enthusiasm for George joining the Council
   c) Consider co-opting a candidate for Council vacancy conduct a confidential ballot
   after candidate presentations, with the Chair or Clerk counting written votes. If appointed, the new Councillor signs the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
   The confidential ballot gave unanimous agreement to George Waterman's co-option to the council.
   Declaration was signed by Cllr Waterman and the Parish Clerk

4. **Election of other offices of the Parish Council:**
   i. **Finance**
      i)Bank Signatories x4
      Cllrs Finch, Best, Curson and Jennifer
      ii) Quarterly check of cashbook.
      Cllr Waterman
   ii. **Allotments Officer**
      Cllr Brown
   iii. **To Propose our delegated representatives to the steering group of the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan**
      Noted that the steering group no longer exists from 19th May but there will be a continuation of the group to oversee the management of the plan which started on 20th May with the first meeting being held on the 13th June.-

Cllrs Curson, Jennifer and Ault with Cllr Finch as a possible observer. A report to be provided at the next meeting.

iv. **Brewers Green Management Committee (Advisory)** –
Cllrs Brown. Taylor, Best, Ault and Curson, next meeting walk around on June 12th.

v. **Village Hall Committee**
Cllr Brown

vi. **Footpath Group Coordinator**
Group now disbanded

vii. **Flood Group Coordinator**
Group now disbanded

viii. **Verge Group Coordinator**
Cllr Ault

ix. **Roydon Round-Up Editor & Co-Editor**
Cllrs Finch and Waterman

x. **Accounts Scrutineer**
Cllr Waterman

Extra Responsibilities proposed at the meeting:

xi. **Defibrillator Manager**
Cllr Curson

xii. **Loke Management Volunteering**
Cllr Ault suggested that this is combined with the Verge Group Co-ordinator and becomes Loke and Verge Management.
Unanimously Agreed

5. To receive and consider accepting apologies from members unable to attend.
No apologies received.

6. To receive and note any declarations of members' pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary/other interests pertaining to items on the following agenda, to note any dispensations granted in respect of business to be discussed and to consider any requests for dispensations.
None declared.

7. Public Forum: To receive County & District Councillors reports and the opportunity for issues to be raised or questions asked.

Meeting closed at 7.35

Bellrope Lane Flooding another 48 hours of flooding. Jet washing and mapping due to take place on 3rd June.

Meeting reopened at 19.42

8. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
a. Tuesday 30th April 2024 (formatting's gone a bit up the creek from now on! Seem to go into a. and then the items start numbering from 1 again …?!)
Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair

9. Matters arising - To note progress on decisions made at the last meeting (for information only and not on current agenda).
All matters had been resolved.

10. Financial Matters and Banking

a) To note the Bank Balances and Bank Reconciliation as of 21st May 2024

Noted (Appendix A)

b) Receipts noted and payments to be noted/authorised.

Noted and authorised. (Appendix B)

c) To receive the draft report from the Internal Auditor

Only received on the previous Friday so will be discussed at the next meeting along with the signing of the AGAR.

Action – Parish Clerk

11. To agree the final submission document for the Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Consultation.

Due to the announcement of the General Election more time is now available to agree the final submission as the closing date will now fall after the election. Agreed to finalise the document at the next meeting. Clerk to send round the amended documents as soon as possible.

Action – Parish Clerk

12. Planning Applications and Decisions.

a) To review and discuss the following applications.

i. **Application - 2024/1110**
Applicant: Mr D Duffin
Location: The Coach House Hall Lane Roydon Norfolk IP22 5XL
Proposal: Internal and external alterations and improvements to the building to include repositioned flue, replacement of garage doors with glazed and panelled timber doors with revised internal layout.
Application Type: Householder
Parish Council Comment – Neutral - No comment

ii. **Application - 2024/1111**
Applicant: Mr D Duffin
Location: The Coach House Hall Lane Roydon Norfolk IP22 5XL
Proposal: Internal and external alterations and improvements to the building to include repositioned flue, replacement of garage doors with glazed and panelled timber doors with revised internal layout.
Application Type: Listed Building Consent
Parish Council Comment – Neutral - No comment

iii. **Application - 2024/1162**
Applicant: Mr Robert Bowden
Location: Land To South Of Home Farm Roydon Diss IP22 5XL
Proposal: Erection of new dwelling & cart shed
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Parish Council Comment – Object - The Parish Council objects to the planning application as it is outside the settlement boundary. The development falls outside of the housing needs requirements stated in the DDNP Policy 4 which supports the need for one and three bedroom homes. The Parish Council would also like to highlight that the newly adopted GNLP confirms there is now a five year land supply and therefore no need for additional houses.

iv. **Application - 2024/1235**
Applicant: Mr D Ward
Location: Barn Adjacent To Willow Farm Darrow Lane Roydon Norfolk

Proposal: Erection of two new build barn style dwellings, cart sheds & additional residential land
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Parish Council Comment – Object - The Parish Council objects to the planning application as it is outside the settlement boundary. The development falls outside of the housing needs requirements stated in the DDNP Policy 4 which supports the need for one and three bedroom houses. The Parish Council would also like to highlight that the newly adopted GNLP confirms there is now a five year land supply and therefore no need for additional houses.
Concerns regarding light pollution within the development have been raised and the Parish Council highlight DDNP Policy 6 stating that likely light spill from within buildings should be minimized through good design.
The Parish Council also have concerns about the number of cars that could potentially be located at the development with 6 spaces for cars in the planning application. Darrow Lane is a single lane road with no formal passing places.
The Parish Council notes that application 2022/2062 applied for at this location for 1x4bd two storey house with detached garage and a 3bd one storey home with car port was refused. The planning permission currently granted for this plot (2023/0023 and 2023/2338) is for a total of 3 x 1bd, one storey dwellings granted under permitted development rights of two Nissen huts and a small barn.

v. **Application 2024/1438**
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Bannon
Location: 9 Brushmakers Way Roydon Norfolk IP22 4QZ
Proposal: First floor extension
Application Type: Householder
Parish Council Comment – Neutral - No comment

a) **To note decisions made since the last meeting of the council.**
i. **Application : 2024/0819**
App Type : Householder
Parish: Roydon
Location : 15 Tottington Lane Roydon Norfolk IP22 5BJ
Proposal : Single storey rear extension
Decision : Approval with Conditions (Delegated)
Date of decision : 8 May 2024
Noted

13. To review the following policies
a) **Internal Controls**
b) **Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control**

Unanimously agreed both policies

Action – Parish Clerk

14. To receive feedback following the recent visit from the Surface Water Drainage Officer.

All letters that had been sent out by the Surface Water Drainage officer were discussed. Councillors were unsure that all of the addresses were correct. Cllr Waterman agreed to speak with his contacts at DTC to see if we can confirm addresses of landowners so that RPC can write follow up letters.

Action – Cllr Waterman

15. To consider information or issues relevant to Council from members for brief discussion and inclusion on a future agenda

Parish Clerk to provide a Meeting calendar for the year 24-25 at the next meeting
Roydon Big Green Week – Debrief from Cllr Ault
Cllr Curson noted that the instructions for the defibrillator had now been updated.
Parish Clerk to complete a new rota for councillor checks on the Recycle centre

Action – Parish Clerk

16. Date & Time of Next Meetings: To confirm the date of Tuesday 25th June 2024 for the Parish Council meeting.

Agreed

21.03 meeting closed

Signed Dated

Emma Chandler, Parish Clerk & RFO

Email clerk@roydon-southnorfolk-pc.gov.uk Telephone: 07707 495297

Appendix A

Bank account Balances @ 21/05/2024			
Business Current Account		£24,931.58	
Business Savings Account		£21,010.01	
Total Balances			£45,941.59
	Previous Month	Current Month month	
Balances carried forward @ 01/04/23	£34,936.42	£34,936.42	
Accounts Payments Ledger YTD gross Expenditure	£1,206.75	£5,989.67	
Accounts Receipts Ledger YTD Income	£0.00	£14,740.85	
Expenditure			
Public Works Loan - 1st May		£2,117.11	
SSE Direct Debit - 1st May		£258.35	
SSE Direct Debit - 2nd May		£153.47	
Total		**£2,528.93**	
Income April/May 2023			
Precept - 26th April		£14,740.85	
Total		**£14,740.85**	
Unprocessed Payments			
BACS 5		£40.00	
BACS 6		£48.63	
BACS 7		£174.00	
BACS 8		£70.00	
BACS 9		£521.48	
BACS 10		£48.00	
BACS 11		£36.00	
BACS 12		£686.01	
BACS 13		£495.88	
BACS 14		£119.00	
BACS 15		£14.99	
Total		£2,253.99	
Income Less Expenditure at 31/05/2024			**£43,687.60**

Payments List as at 21st May 2024						
Date		Payee	Service	Gross	Net	VAT
28/05/2024	BACS 5	Roydon Village Hall	Hall Hire	£40.00		
28/05/2024	BACS 6	Wave	Water Bill Allotments	£48.63		
28/05/2024	BACS 7	Town and Country Printers	RRU Printing May Issue	£174.00		
28/05/2024	BACS 8	NALC	Website Fee	£70.00		
28/05/2024	BACS 9	NALC	Membership Fee	£521.48		
28/05/2024	BACS 10	NALC	Charitable Trust Training (TA)	£48.00	£40.00	£8.00
28/05/2024	BACS 11	NALC	Biodiversity Training (TA)	£36.00	£30.00	£6.00
28/05/2024	BACS 12	Clear Insurance	Insurance Premuim	£686.01	£617.33	£68.68
28/05/2024	BACS 13	E Chandler	Clerk Salary	£495.88		
28/05/2024	BACS 14	HMRC	PAYE	£119.00		
28/05/2024	BACS 15	T Ault	Deer Fencing	£14.99		
Totals				**£2,253.99**	**£687.33**	**£82.68**

Roydon Parish Council March 2024 Meeting Action Plan

Date	Agenda Item	Matter	Action	Actioned By	Date of Completion	Outcome
26/09/2023	Item 12	Brewers Green	Parish Clerk to order the bench. Agreed to reimburse and agreed to proceed. Cllr Curson to send the Clerk details.	Parish Clerk	ASAP	Clerk contacted donator to obtain bank detail to reimburse whole amount as now has had a change of mind.
30/10/2023	AOB	Notice Boards	Cllr Curson to send pictures to the Clerk for the application	Cllr Curson	ASAP	High Road Notice Board in place. Louis Lane to be completed asap. Ongoing
26/03/2024	Matter Arising	Defibrillator maintenance training	Cllrs Finch and Jennifer volunteered to meet with Cllr Curson to receive the training.	Cllrs Curson, Finch and Jennifer	ASAP	Complete **Matter Closed**
28/05/2024	Item 10c	Internal Audit Report	Provide to the next meeting	Parish Clerk	June Meeting	On agenda **Matter Closed**
28/05/2024	Item 11	NG Consultation	Due to the announcement of the General Election the consultation deadline has been extended. Agreed to finalise the document at the June meeting	Parish Clerk	June Meeting	On agenda **Matter Closed**
28/05/2024	Item 12	Planning Applications	Process all applications on the planning portal.	Parish Clerk	ASAP	All comments were submitted to the portal within the time constraints **Matter Closed**
28/05/2024	Item 13	Policies	a) Internal Controls b) Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control Clerk to update on the website	Parish Clerk	ASAP	Updated **Matter Closed**

Roydon Parish Council March 2024 Meeting Action Plan

28/05/2024	Item 14	Surface water drainage	Cllr Waterman to speak to contacts at DTC to get confirmation of landowners in order to write follow up letters	Cllr Waterman		

Bank account Balances @ 19/06/2024			
Business Current Account		£21,744.97	
Business Savings Account		£21,010.01	
Total Balances			£42,754.98
	Previous Month	Current Month month	
Balances carried forward @ 01/04/23	£34,936.42	£34,936.42	
Accounts Payments Ledger YTD gross Expenditure	£5,989.67	£9,704.44	
Accounts Receipts Ledger YTD Income	£14,740.85	£14,740.85	
Expenditure			
Greenways Recycling BACS 16 30/05/2024		£840.00	
SSE		£92.62	
Total		**£932.62**	
Income May/June 2023			
Total		**£0.00**	
Unprocessed Payments			
BACS 17		£58.76	
BACS 18		£665.00	
BACS 19		£667.01	
BACS 20		£188.35	
BACS 21		£188.35	
BACS 22		£84.80	
BACS 23		£300.00	
BAC 24		£15.00	
BACS 25		£495.88	
BACS 26		£119.00	
Total		£2,782.15	
Income Less Expenditure at 30/06/2024			**£39,972.83**

Payments List as at 19th June 2024						
Date		Payee	Service	Gross	Net	VAT
31/05/2024	BACS 16	Greenways Recycling LTD	Green Waste Clearance	£840.00	£700.00	£140.00
21/06/2024	BACS 17	TT Jones Electrical	Street Light Maintenance	£58.76	£48.97	£9.79
21/06/2024	BACS 18	JM Crerar	Grounds Maintenance	£665.00		
21/06/2024	BACS 19	Excite Solutions	Grounds Maintenance July-Oct 23	£667.01	£555.84	£111.17
21/06/2024	BACS 20	Excite Solutions	Grounds Maintenance April 24	£188.35	£156.96	£31.39
21/06/2024	BACS 21	Excite Solutions	Grounds Maintenance May 24	£188.35	£156.96	£31.39
21/06/2024	BACS 22	Mr S Finch	Plant Reimbursment	£84.80		
21/06/2024	BACS 23	Mr T Brown	Internal Audit Fee	£300.00		
21/06/2024	BAC 24	A Doggett	Waterproof poster	£15.00		
28/06/2024	BACS 25	E Chandler	Clerk Salary	£495.88		
28/06/2024	BACS 26	HMRC	PAYE	£119.00		
Totals				**£3,622.15**	**£1,618.73**	**£323.74**

BUDGET 2024/2025		Spend to 30 June 2024	% Budget Spent
Allotments	£500.00	£0.00	0.00
Auditors	£500.00	£300.00	60.00
CIL	£540.53	£0.00	0.00
Clerks Employment Costs	£7,735.44	£1,844.64	23.85
Expenses	£150.00	£0.00	0.00
Grants	£1,000.00	£0.00	0.00
Grounds maintenance	£7,133.00	£1,854.76	26.00
Insurance	£735.00	£617.33	83.99
Dog Bins	£948.15	£0.00	0.00
Loan Repayments	£4,234.22	£2,117.11	50.00
Other	£2,367.00	£532.79	22.51
S137	£1,300.00	£0.00	0.00
Streetlight maintenance	£200.00	£58.76	29.38
Streetlight replacement	£1,000.00	£0.00	0.00
Subscriptions	£621.48	£591.48	95.17
Utilities	£1,474.95	£621.06	42.11
Village Hall / Parish Room	£361.46	£40.00	11.07
	£30,260.70	**£8,577.93**	28.35

	£1,427.84	£356.80	£60.00		£1,844.64

Total amount Paid

Report to Roydon Parish Council

The Internal Audit of the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024

1. Introduction and Summary.

1.1 The Internal Audit for the year 2023/24 confirmed that the Council maintains robust governance arrangements and an effective framework of financial control and administration.

1.2 By examination of the 2023/24 accounts and supporting documentation it was confirmed that the Clerk, in the role as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), is satisfactorily undertaking the administration of the Council's financial affairs and providing financial management information to enable the Council to make well-informed decisions.

1.3 The Accounts for the year confirm the following:

Total Receipts for the year:	*£34,874,41*
Total Payments in the year:	*£27,060.17*
Total Reserves at year-end:	*£34,936.42*

1.4 The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was examined and the following figures agreed with the Clerk/RFO for inclusion in Section 2 Accounting Statements 2023/24 (rounded for purposes of the Return):

Balances at beginning of year (1 April 2023):	*Box 1: £27,122*
Annual Precept 2023/24:	*Box 2: £29,193*
Total Other Receipts:	*Box 3: £5,681*
Staff Costs:	*Box 4: £7,001*
Loan interest/capital repayments:	*Box 5: £4,234*
All Other payments:	*Box 6: £15,825*
Balances carried forward (31 March 2024):	*Box 7: £34,936*
Total cash/short-term investments:	*Box 8: £34,936*
Total fixed assets:	*Box 9: £123,490*
Total borrowings:	*Box 10: £10,233*

1.5 Sections One and Two of the AGAR are due to be approved and signed at a forthcoming meeting of the Council. The Internal Auditor has completed the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 within the AGAR.

1.6 The following Internal Audit work was carried out on the adequacy of systems of internal control in accordance with the Audit Plan. Comments and any recommendations arising from the review are made below.

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2. Governance, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other Regulatory matters *(examination of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Formal Policies and Procedures, Tenders where relevant. Acting within the legal framework, including Data Protection legislation).*

2.1 The Annual Parish Council meeting took place on 17 May 2023. The first item of business was the Election of a Chair, as required by the Local Government Act 1972. Appointment of Committee members and other roles within the Council were also made at the meeting, including the nomination of bank signatories and a Councillor to undertake Quarterly checking of the Cashbook.

2.2 The Council demonstrates good governance practice by maintaining a Delegated Powers Policy to ensure that the Council continues to function effectively at times of emergency including when it may not be possible to hold public meetings. The Policy was reviewed and approved by the Council at the meeting on 28 November 2023.

2.3 Active involvement continued to be taken in the Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan (DDNP) as part of the Council's overall development pathway, with reports being presented to meetings of the Council.

2.4 Standing Orders are in place. At its meeting on 26 March 2024 the Council reviewed, updated and approved the Standing Orders, which are based on the model document published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

2.5 Financial Regulations are in place and were reviewed, agreed and adopted by the Council at its meeting on 30 April 2023 (Minute 13a refers). NALC has recently published updated model Financial Regulations for local councils to consider and adopt as necessary.

2.6 The Council's Minutes are well presented and provide clear evidence of the decisions taken by the Council in the year. The Clerk/RFO confirmed that all pages of the Minutes are signed by the Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes are approved.

2.7 At the meeting on 26 April 2023 the Council received Mrs Benson's resignation as Clerk/RFO to the Council with a leaving date of 31 July 2023. On 28 June 2023 the Council confirmed Miss Emma Chandler's appointment and noted that a starting date of 15 July provides for a 2-week hand-over with the outgoing Clerk/RFO.

2.8 At its meeting on 26 March 2024 the Council agreed that it met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, for Roydon Parish Council to adopt the General Power of Competence (GPoC). The Clerk/RFO explained how the council met the eligibility and the Council declared itself eligible.

2.9 The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Fee Payer/Data Controller for the provision of council services under Data Protection legislation (Registration ZA556137, expiring 31 October 2024). Although the ICO confirmed to the Clerk/RFO that correct contact details were held, the ICO's website still displays an out-of-date contact address for the Council. The Clerk/RFO agreed to remind the ICO that the Council's Registration details on the ICO website still

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displays incorrect information and that correction is required to ensure that any data protection enquiries made to the Council will be routed to the correct address.

2.10 To assist compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the Council has a GDPR Policy in place,

2.11 The Council has a number of Policies, Procedures and Protocols in place to provide for good governance. At the meeting on 26 September 2023 the Council reviewed and adopted the following:

i. Allotment Policy
ii. Allotment Risk Assessment
iii. Allotment Rules, Regulations and Tenancy Agreement

The Council adopted the Equalities Policy and the Social Media Policy 30 October 2023 the Biodiversity Policy on 28 November 2023.

2.12 As part of the Council's response to Freedom of Information requirements, on 22 March 2023 the Council reviewed and approved the ICO Model Publication Scheme, including the Council's Guide to Information Published and the Schedule of Charges. Whilst most information is freely available on the Council's website, if hard copies are required the charges noted would be levied.

2.13 The Council has in place a Training and Development Policy, Health and Safety Policy and a Complaints Policy, all of which were reviewed and adopted by the Council at its meeting on 28 September 2022 and due for review in September 2024. A copy of each has been placed on the Council's website.

2.14 Similarly, the Planning Policy was reviewed, updated and approved by the Council at its meeting on 22 February 2023 and published on the Council's website.

2.15 At its meeting on 22 March 2023 the Council considered and agreed the Councillors' Code of Conduct (Minute 9c refers) The Council demonstrates good practice by periodically reviewing the Code of Conduct, to emphasise the requirements and responsibilities placed upon each individual Councillor and for the purposes of discharging the Council's duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within its area. A copy of the Code has been published on the Council's website. The Internal Audit Report 2022/23 noted that the Council discussed the new Model Councillor Code of Conduct published by the Local Government Association (LGA) and supported by NALC but the Council preferred a shorter, more precise Code. Some paragraphs from the LGA Code were added to the Council's existing Code. The Code was considered and agreed by the Council on 30 April 2024. No changes were made.

2.16 The National Association of Local Councils has recommended that local councils consider registering their website with an official .gov.uk domain name with councillor email addresses linked to that domain name. The Council applied to the Norfolk Association of Local Councils to participate in the pilot .gov.uk domain/email scheme. At the meeting on 25 July 2023 the Council noted that it had been selected to be included in the pilot scheme under the domain name *Roydon-southnorfolk-pc.gov.uk.* The Council noted on 26 September that all the email addresses had been set up with many Councillors now able to access the new email.

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2.17 A Website Accessibility Statement has been published on the Council's website to assist with compliance with the Website Accessibility Regulations. The Statement details what the Council has done to ensure that as many people as possible are able to use the website, provides information regarding some older documents that may not meet present accessibility standards and lists contact details in the event of accessibility problems.

3. Accounting Procedures and Proper Book-keeping *(examination of entries in the Cashbook, regular reconciliations, supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts and VAT accounting).*

3.1 The Clerk/RFO provided the Internal Auditor with a copy of the Cashbook Spreadsheet, which included details of the Payments List and the Receipts List.

3.2 The Spreadsheet is referenced and facilitates an audit trail to the Bank Statements and the financial information prepared by the Clerk/RFO. As the Internal Audit was conducted remotely/electronically, the supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts were not examined.

3.3 Frequent reclaims are being submitted to HMRC for VAT paid. The re-claim of £759.05 for VAT paid during the period ending 31 March 2023 was submitted to HMRC on 4 April 2023, received from HMRC on 13 April 2023 and reported to Council on 26 April 2023.

3.4 Similarly, the VAT re-claim of £1,222.30 for the VAT paid from April 2023 to February 2024 was received at bank on 20 March 2024.

3.5 The Clerk/RFO is required to complete a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Report for the year 2023/24, displaying a £2,077.73 balance brought forward as at 1 April 2023, £0 CIL Receipts in the year and spending of £1,203.00 in the year on Notice Boards. The balance carried forward in the CIL Fund as at 31 March 2024 was accordingly £874.73. The Pro forma for completion is received from the District Council and has to be returned by 31 December 2024 and published on the Parish Council's website by that date.

3.6 A Statement of Variances (explaining significant differences in receipts and payments between the years 2022/23 and 2023/24) has been prepared by the Clerk/RFO for submission to the External Auditors and for publication on the Council's website.

4. Bank Reconciliation *(Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements).*

4.1 The Clerk/RFO routinely presents Bank Reconciliations to meetings of the Council. Up to and including the 25 July 2023 the Council displayed good financial practice by the Minutes of the Council's meetings recorded that the Chair signed a copy of the bank statements and the bank reconciliation with details of Receipts and Payments being appended to the Minutes of the Council's meetings. This ceased from the meeting held on 26 September 2023.

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4.2 The Unity Bank Current Account (£13,926.41) and Unity Bank Savings Account (£21,010.01) statements as at 31 March 2024, taking in account the unpresented cheque 300004 (dated 22 March 2023 for £18.82), reconciled to the End-of-Year accounts and agreed with the overall Bank Reconciliation.

4.3 Cheque 300004 is now out of date; in practice, banks will usually reject a cheque if attempts are made to pay it in or cash it more than six months from the date of issue (the date written on the cheque). Accordingly, the cheque can now be written back into the accounts as a deduction from Payments.

5. Year End procedures *(Regarding accounting procedures used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents. Verifying sample payments and income. Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate).*

5.1 End-of-Year accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis and were in good order. Sample audit trails were undertaken and were found to be in order.

6. Budgetary controls *(Verification of the budgetary process with reference to Council Minutes and supporting documents).*

Precept 2023/24: £29,193.00

Precept 2024/25: £29,481.70

6.1 A proposed Budget and Precept for the year 2023/24 was discussed and agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4 January 2023 (the Minutes of the meeting approved by the Council on 25 January 2023 state the amount of the Precept agreed was £29,193).

6.2 The Council's Financial Regulation (FR) 4.8 provides that:

'The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of £0 or 0% of the budget'

6.3 The Clerk/RFO in post presented the First Quarter Budget Monitoring Report to the Council at the meeting held on 25 July 2023. The Report compared the Budget with expenditure and income for the 2023/24 year, displaying the budgetary headings and the % Budget spent. The report was well-constructed and demonstrate that the estimates for 2023/24 were initially used effectively for financial control and budgetary control purposes in the year of account.

6.4 There was no evidence in the Council's Minutes of the Council receiving and approving the Second Quarter Monitoring Report (ending 30 September 2023). The Clerk/RFO explained this had been an oversight. The Spreadsheet (which was very simplistic and did not lend itself easily to identify the totals for each Quarter year) has

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now been adapted so that each Quarter tracks through to the correct page and now provides totals as each transaction is input into the Cashbook. The End of year Budget v Actual Report was received by the Council at its meeting on 26 March 2024 (Minute 8c refers).

6.5 A Draft Budget and proposed Precept for the year 2024/25 was discussed by the Council at its meeting on 9 January 2024. The final Budget 2024/25, the Precept of £29,481.70 and the Earmarked Reserves for 2024/25 were considered and approved by the Council at the meeting on 30 January 2024 (Minutes 8a, b and c refer).

6.6 The Clerk/RFO ensures that the Council is aware of its responsibilities and commitments and the need for forward planning and the holding of adequate reserves.

6.7 The Council has a Reserves Policy in place and provides that the Council will aim to maintain General Reserves of between 9 and 12 months of Net Revenue Expenditure in accordance with the JPAG Guidance as follows:

"*The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a Smaller Authority's General Reserve is that this should be maintained at between three (3) and twelve (12) months Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE)."*

"The smaller the authority, the closer the figure should be to 12 months NRE, the larger the authority the nearer to 3 months."

6.8 The Overall Reserves at the year-end 31 March 2024 totalled £34,936.42, of which £4,524.73 is earmarked/restricted, as follows:

Allotment Deposits:	£650.00
Allotments:	£1,000.00
Streetlights:	£2,000.00
CIL Fund (restricted):	£874.73

6.9 As at 31 March 2024 the General Reserves (Overall Reserves less Earmarked Reserves) were accordingly £30,411.69 and is in line with the Council's Reserves Policy and JPAG Best Practice. The Council maintained sufficient reserves and contingency sums to meet, within reason, any unforeseen items of expense.

7. Internal Control and the Management of Risk *(Review by Council of the effectiveness of internal controls, including risk assessment, and Minuted accordingly).*

7.1 The Minutes of the Council's meeting on 27 February 2024 noted that the Council reviewed and approved Risk Assessment documentation (Minute 10a refers).

7.2 The Council reviewed the Internal Control Policy and the Effectiveness of Internal Controls at its meeting on 22 March 2023, within the 2022/23 year of account. The Council reviewed the Internal Control Policies more recently in May 2024, within the 2024/25 year of account. However, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require a review by the Full Council, at least once each financial year, of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control, including the arrangements for management

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of risk, with the review suitably Minuted. Accordingly, during 2023/24 the Council did not fully comply with the Regulations in place.

Recommendation 1: Each financial year the Council should comply with Section 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and undertake a review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control, including the arrangements for management of risk, with the review suitably Minuted.

7.3 Insurance was in place for the year of account. At its meeting on 26 April 2023 the Council approved the renewal of insurance previously agreed on a three-year long-term agreement (year 2). The renewal premium of £645.73 was paid to BHIB (insurance brokers) on 24 April 2023, the cover being provided by Aviva Insurance for the year 1 June 2023 to 31 May 2024.

7.4 The Employer's Liability cover and Public Liability cover each stand at £10m. The Fidelity Guarantee (Councillor/Employee Dishonesty) cover stands at £250,000, which meets the current recommended guidelines which provide that the cover should be at least the sum of the year-end balances plus 50% of the precept/grants.

7.5 The Clerk/RFO confirmed that checks are made between the insurance cover and the asset register to ensure that appropriate cover is in place.

8. Income Controls *(regarding sums received from Precept, Grants, Loans and other income including credit control mechanisms).*

8.1 The Council receives income from Allotment Tenants. At its meeting on 25 July 2023 the Council reviewed the allotment tenancy rents and considered any rent increases for the year beginning October 2024. The Council agreed the charges to apply for the year beginning October 2024 as Full Plot £36 and Part Plot £18.

8.2 The Clerk/RFO provides the Council with regular reports on the progress of rents received and confirmed to the Council on 27 February 2024 that all rents for the current year had been paid (Minute 11 refers).

8.3 The Clerk/RFO confirmed that a Register of Allotment holders is maintained and includes details of payments and deposits made. The Clerk/RFO explained to the Internal Auditor that a separate spreadsheet is maintained with names and contact details. Not all the tenants paid a deposit because those who have had a plot for a number of years were not asked to pay a deposit when they first took an allotment on and explains the reason why the number of plots and the deposits held do not equate exactly.

9. Payroll Controls (*PAYE and NIC in place; compliant with HMRC procedures; records relating to contracts of employment).*

9.1 Payroll Services are operated in-house in accordance with HMRC requirements. Detailed payslips are produced and PAYE is in operation. A copy of the Clerk/RFO's P60 End of Year Certificate for the 2023/24 year was presented to the Internal Auditor.

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9.2 The Contract of Employment for the Clerk/RFO confirms a starting date of 15 July 2023 and that the salary is at the LC2 range at 8 hours each week.

9.3 With regard to the meeting of legislation relating to workplace pensions, the Clerk/RFO confirmed to the Internal Auditor that the Council had completed a re-declaration of compliance under the Pensions Act 2008 at the time it became due in September 2023. (The re-declaration of compliance confirms to the Pensions Regulator that the Council complies with its duties as an employer and has to be completed every three years).

10. Assets Controls *(Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets; recording of fixed asset valuations; cross checking on insurance cover).*

10.1 An Asset Register is in place. At the meeting on 28 June 2023 the Council noted that the Parish Council is the Custodian Trustee of the Village Hall and that Council has no financial responsibility towards the running of the Hall. The Council agreed that the Village Hall should be displayed on the Asset Register as a nil value. The Clerk/RFO confirmed to the Council on 30 January 2024 that the Council is the Custodian Trustee of the Village Hall only; the Village Hall Committee is the Managing Trustee and that the Council is not named on the insurance documents.

10.2 The Village Hall was removed from the Register by the Council at its meeting on 27 February 2024 (Minute 10a refers). It is good financial practice for a local council to review its Asset Register each year to confirm that all assets continue to be appropriately recorded and that any new acquisitions or any deletions from the Register can be formally approved.

10.3 At the meeting on 26 March 2024 the Clerk/RFO informed the Council of the removal of the Village Hall and Gates as they are no longer assets of the Council. The meeting also agreed to remove the badminton equipment and carpet bowls and contact the Village Hall Committee to gift those to the hall. The Council directed that a notice board and litter bin be added to the Register.

10.4 As at 31 March 2024 the Register displays a total valuation of £123,490, a net decrease of £352,002 over the valuation of £475,492 at the end of the previous year (31 March 2023) and reflects the removal of the Village Hall (£350,000), the Village Hall Gates (£2,000) the Badminton Equipment (£1 nominal/community value) and the Carpet Bowls Set (£1 nominal/community value).

10.5 The Council demonstrates good practice by closely checking the insurance cover against the Council's Asset Register to ensure that all items are adequately covered.

10.6 The Asset Register complies with the current requirements which provide that each asset should be displayed at a consistent value, year-on-year. The value has been correctly entered into Box 9 of Section 2 of the AGAR.

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11. Petty Cash *(Associated books and established system in place).*

11.1 A Petty Cash system is not in use; an expenses system is in place, with on-line payments being made for expenses incurred.

12. Internal Financial Controls, Payments Controls and Audit Procedures *(Confirmation that the Council has satisfactory internal financial controls in place for making payments with adequate documentation to support/evidence payments made. Any previous audit recommendations implemented).*

12.1 The Council has satisfactory internal financial controls in place. The Clerk/RFO provides comprehensive financial reports to Council meetings and Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.

12.2 The Council demonstrates good financial practice by receiving details of the current financial position, including bank balances and a completed Bank Reconciliation and a Schedule of Payments to be authorised by the Council.

12.3 The Clerk/RFO confirmed that currently there is not a Councillor Internal Examiner in place but the Council is looking to appoint a Councillor to undertake those important tasks to enhance the internal control arrangements as soon as practicably possible.

12.4 Up to and including 25 July 2023 Receipts and Payments were listed and appended in the Council's Minutes as part of the overall financial control framework. Subsequent to that date they were not listed,

Recommendation 2: In the interests of good governance, good financial practice and transparency in its financial transactions, it is recommended that Receipts and Payments are listed in (or appended to) the Council's published Minutes as part of the overall financial control framework to evidence the payments approved by the Council at the meeting,

12.5 From October 2022 the Council has made online payments through Unity Bank. The Clerk/RFO initiates the payments by setting up the transaction within the internet banking system, Details of the payments are then emailed by the Clerk/RFO to two Councillors who then authorise the transaction to release the payment. Invoices and the Payments List are then agreed and signed at the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk/RFO confirmed that no cheques had been raised after 28 June 2023.

12.6 The Internal Audit report for the year 2022/23 was dated 14 April 2023 and was received and accepted by the Council at its meeting on 26 April 2023. The Report raised no matters of concern.

12.7 The Council formally appointed the Internal Auditor for the year 2023/24 at its meeting on 27 February 2024 (Minute 7 refers).

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13. External Audit *(Exemption declared or any Recommendations put forward/ comments made following the Limited Assurance Review).*

13.1 The External Auditors' Report and Certificate for the year 2022/23 were dated 28 July 2023. No matters of concern had been raised other than the comment that the Council had not provided an adequate explanation for some variances between the years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

13.2 There is no record of the Council being presented with the External Auditors' Report and Certificate for the year 2022/23.

Recommendation 3: The External Audit Reports received by the Council should always be formally presented to the Council and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting of the Council. In this way the Council will formally evidence that it has received and accepted the External Audit Report and Certificate and can take action on any issues raised within the document.

13.3 As gross income/expenditure exceeded £25,000 in the year of account ending 31 March 2024, the Council is subject to a Limited Assurance Review for the year 2022/23 by the External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP (AGAR Form 3 requires completion and submission to the External Auditors).

14. Publication Requirements.

14.1 Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 authorities must publish each year the following information on a publicly accessible website (and no later than 1 July):

Notice of the period for the exercise of Public Rights
AGAR - Sections 1 and 2

14.2 Documents in respect of the year 2022/23 had been published and were readily accessible on the Council's website:

https://roydon-southnorfolk-pc.gov.uk/april-2022-march-2023/

14.3. The items listed below are to be published following completion of the External Audit (and no later than 30 September):

Notice of Conclusion of Audit
AGAR - Section 3
AGAR - Sections 1 and 2 (including any amendments as a result of the Limited Assurance Review).

14.4 The Internal Auditor was able to confirm that the documents for the year 2022/23 had been published on the Council's website.

https://roydon-southnorfolk-pc.gov.uk/april-2022-march-2023/

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15. Additional Comments.

15.1 I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for her assistance during the course of the audit work.

Trevor Brown

Trevor Brown, CPFA

Internal Auditor

6 June 2024

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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

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE 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).*			

	Yes	No	Not applicable
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

DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date DD/MM/YYYY

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

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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

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	No*		*'Yes' means that this authority:*
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	*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

***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

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward			*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			*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts			*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			*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			*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward			*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			*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			*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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date DD/MM/YYYY

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 ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

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

ROYDON PARISH COUNCIL, SOUTH NORFOLK.

Response to National Grid statutory consultation,

Norwich to Tilbury, April to July, 2024.

Roydon Parish Council (RPC) reiterates its responses to National Grid's (NG) 2022 consultation, and subsequent 2023 consultation.

RPC considers that NG must consult on alternatives to its Norwich to Tilbury plan which makes the presumption of extensive use of pylons with little undergrounding. Neither an offshore transmission system nor much more extensive undergrounding have been presented alongside the dominant pylon plan so it is not possible for the public to make meaningful comparisons between the options and, as such, is not being fully transparent in the alternative possibilities for bringing this project to fruition.

RPC wants a pause in the whole process to give time for proper evaluation of all other options other than just the pylons proposed by NG.

Essex County Council, on behalf of themselves and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, commissioned consultant Mr. Andy Hiorns to produce a report on the need for the Norwich to Tilbury proposals put forward by NG. The report concluded that the timing of the proposals was premature and that the transmission route would not be needed until mid-2030s.

RPC wants a pause in the process in order that a full and transparent evaluation of the offshore transmission option is carried out. This option would be best for the community of Roydon, both environmentally and socially.

Additionally, a full assessment should also be carried out on the use of High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) throughout the whole route overland which would produce much less environmental and visual damage, this being considered the second best option by RPC.

Pylons are an old technology for overland transmission belonging to the early 20th century. This fact is recognised by NG and the harm they cause to landscapes. NG are removing pylons in other parts of the UK. Why is East Anglia different?

The NG preference for pylons in its plan is based on costings from 2012 when new technology was not so advanced as the present time. This fact was recognised by the Minister for Energy Security and Net Zero, Justin Tomlinson, in the House of Commons on 23rd May when he said "We had a deep dive discussion about overhead cables being the strong starting presumption, which in simple terms is based on the cost, as per the electricity system operator's 2012 figures. I am sure that the House would recognise that, since 2012, significant advances have been made to new technology. As has been mentioned, Germany has already made underground cables the default." In the same month, the Energy Secretary, Claire Coutinho, stated that "our energy security must not come at the expense of food security" when announcing limitations on solar farms on best quality farmland. This restriction should also apply to the Norwich to Tilbury project where infrastructure and build will compromise and use farmland of grade 3 and above.

RPC opposes NG's plan for pylons and partial undergrounding through the Waveney Valley as it currently stands because of the great harm it would do to the valued landscape

The route proposed would take the pylons or cabling through the narrow gap between the habitats of Roydon Fen and Wortham Ling**.** Suffolk Wildlife Trust, in describing Roydon Fen, a County Wildlife Site, states that "This 49 acre reserve offers a sense of the wildness a landscape of extensive wetland once would have offered**.** Wortham Ling is Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) composed of acid grassland and dry heath."

A joint Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils Valued Landscape assessment notes that "…the length of the Waveney Valley expresses many special qualities, and in the context of Suffolk and Norfolk, it is considered to be a valued landscape. Conserving and enhancing the special qualities articulated in this report is a key aspiration of existing planning policy."

The Waveney Valley is described by Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) as "part of a chain of fens that are strung like jewels along the Suffolk and Norfolk border. This wildlife corridor contains bat roosts as well as Schedule 1 protected bird species such as Barn Owl, Heron and Swift. The valley consists of rare peatland water meadows and, recognising this fact, SWT have recently embarked upon a long-term project, with the support of government funding, to connect and improve the river valley between Diss and the headwaters of the Little Ouse to the west which includes al that part of the Waveney Valley within Roydon Parish. Pylons would be a huge visual intrusion on this section of the valley, compromising the recovery project. The proposal to underground cables through this part of the Waveney valley would be no less damaging than the pylons, apart from removing their visual impact. The proposal to start undergrounding adjacent to the A1066 near Hall Lane, and ending on the other side of the Waveney valley to the south near the village of Palgrave, would require large CSE compounds at each of these locations. Along with associated access and security apparatus required for these structures, their overall visual impact would be completely out of character with the local landscape, standing out along the skyline of each side of the valley, and being almost as intrusive as pylons. This undergrounding would only be acceptable if it was extended much further to the north and south.

Extending the undergrounding well to the north would be required to avoid the proximity of the pylons to residential properties in Snow Street, with 11 listed buildings which are heritage assets integral to the character of Roydon village. Additionally, the pylon route just north of the A1066 and just west of Hall Lane, Roydon is exceptionally close to residential properties along Hall Lane and as it is also to properties at the west end of Snow Street and in Darrow Lane. It is, in fact, incredible that it should be proposed to place pylons so close to them.

The prospect of the implementation of the proposals set out for this project has caused much anxiety and mental stress to many of the residents, considering not only the prospect of pylons themselves but the high level of local disruption over the long construction period with local roads completely unsuitable to high numbers of HGV movements and general construction traffic. Many of the roads have no pavements, blind turns and are single lane. This view has been taken by the County Highways Department in relation to other recent planning applications of a similar scale in the area where large numbers of HGV movements and other heavy vehicles are expected, notably applications in relation to an industrial plant at Deal Farm, Bressingham. National Grid figures show HGV traffic increases to our section of the route ranging from 26% to 75% (the 12 hours from 7am to 7pm on weekdays**)** depending on the specific site being worked**,** peak construction being in 2029. These are the areas described in NG's report as A1066 High Road, Park Road and Victoria Road. This will produce 8,984 additional vehicle movements per day, 795 of them being HGVs.

RPC notes that the proposed pylon route, passing through the narrow gap between Roydon and Bressingham, necessitates a number of sharp turns in contravention of Holford Rule 3. This rule seeks to ensure the very minimal use of the larger angle towers but, in the flat landscape, these are even more visually impacting.

The Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan (DDNP) was adopted by referendum in 2023, and includes the whole of Roydon parish. The DDNP designates Key Views in Roydon as part of DDNP Policy 16, chosen by local residents, two of which will be severely affected by the proposed pylon route. These views very much give a feel of place to the locality and, it should be noted, were chosen by the public <u>before</u> the Norwich to Tilbury project was public knowledge. Key View 28 looks all around from the middle of Darrow Lane, just north of Snow Street; the open landscape nature of this view will be devastated by the visual impact of 50m. pylons. Similarly, Key View 25 looks south from the churchyard of the grade 1 listed St. Remigius Church across the Waveney Valley to the south, another open landscape where 50m pylons would completely blight this vista. The setting of the church would itself be seriously compromised by the proximity of pylons. Additionally looking west from Key View 24, from Public Footpath 15, will produce a clear sight of the pylon route.

It is to be noted that public footpaths 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 14 (part of Angles Way) and 23 will all be impacted by temporary closure during construction and the very close proximity of pylons permanently. Additionally, footpaths 8 and 15, will have clear views of the pylons when in place. These footpaths are well used by local people as well as visitors to the area.

Fox Wood Forest School, situated on Snow Street, and developed to support children's mental and physical well-being through connection with nature, will be compromised in the build process and permanently through the pylon's visual impact. Heron Meadow, a Care Farm promoting well-being and learning, off Doit Lane, Roydon will be similarly affected.

The Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan (DDNP) defines 37 Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA) within its seven parishes which are important to the history of the locality, the character of the neighbourhood and sense of place. The setting and enjoyment of some of these will be spoilt by 50m. high pylons:

- Roydon Fen (Track and Environs), NDHA 16. Clear site of pylon line at its western end.
- Roydon Church and White Hart, NDHA 27. The vista to the south from this grouping of historic buildings will be entirely blighted by the presence of pylons
- The mediaeval moated site of Bush Hall, NDHA23, lies directly on the proposed pylon route in the bottom of the Waveney Valley .

The DDNP also designated a number of Local Green Spaces (LGS) to be afforded protection. RPC considers that the setting of Little Green, Snow Street, LGS 31, and Potash Lane Fields, LGS 34, will be spoilt both during and after construction of the proposed pylon route.

RPC is also concerned by the evidence suggesting an association between proximity to power lines and childhood leukaemia. Emeritus Professor Denis Henshaw in the school of Chemistry at Bristol university is a member of the co-ordinating committee of the Government Stakeholder Advisory Group for EMF (SAGE). He is a member also of the Human Radiation Effects Group funded by the charity Children with Leukaemia to research the possible environmental causes of childhood leukaemia with the emphasis on non-ionising radiation. Currently, evidence suggest that power frequency magnetic fields suppress the production of the hormone melatonin, a natural anti-cancer agent secreted by the pineal gland, which may explain the adverse health effects associated with magnetic field exposure, as experienced in proximity to high voltage power lines. Power lines also emit corona ions which may also explain the apparent increase in the risk of childhood leukaemia within 600 metres of such lines. Further studies by the Oncology department of Bristol University support this view. Whilst appreciating such associations are not conclusively proven, nevertheless RPC, and local residents, are deeply concerned by such risks and the council considers, therefore, that the presence of such power lines present an unacceptable level of possible risk to human health, and something not to be gambled with.

RPC considers that residents should not be "bribed" by offers of so-called community benefits by way of compensation. Such benefits do not compensate for the huge, permanent damage that 50m pylons will do to our residents' quality of life and the environment, as well as significant reduction in property values.

RPC appreciates that the UK needs more energy security, and from sustainable resources. However, this project will directly benefit London and the south-east of England whilst East Anglia is left permanently scarred by it. The offshore option should, as stated earlier, be fully evaluated and if any additional cost is involved over and above that of the land route, then this should be funded by those communities benefitting from the scheme.

To conclude, RPC considers the options to be, in order of favour:

1. Pause the scheme and fully investigate the offshore option with a view to its implementation unless there is very good reason why not, excepting cost.
2. Pause the scheme and build the whole route underground using HVDC cables, now possible with new technologies proven in other European countries.
3. Pause the scheme and extend the undergrounding over more significant lengths of the route to protect the landscape and environment, and avoid close proximity to people's homes as set out above.

On behalf of Roydon Parish Council,

South Norfolk.

RPC Meeting Calendar 2024-25

25th June 2024

27th August 2024

24th September 2024

29th October 2024

26th November 2024

17th December 2024

28th January 2025

25th February 2025

25th March 2025

29th April 2025

27th May 2025

It is a requirement of BS7671:2018 (IET Wiring Regulations 18th Edition) that all fixed wired electrical installations are inspected, tested and certified as safe every 5 years. This includes all street furniture (street lighting columns).

Following a review of our records, we are concerned by the fact that we cannot find a record of Council's Street lighting assets ever having been inspected, tested and certified as such.

With this in mind, we are able to undertake a certification programme at a cost of £15.00 per asset (excluding VAT). We would manage this process completely, delivering 100% of your assets electrically tested, inspected and most importantly certified on a rolling programme of 20% yearly over a 5year period.

As your street lighting contractor, please contact us as soon as possible to arrange for these works to be undertaken.

Assuring you of our best attention at all times.

Yours sincerely

Paul Jones
Managing Director
T T Jones Electrical Limited