

SECTION 1 – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/24

(in which the parish council has to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to each of the following statements).

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:

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
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Financial management is met through the quarterly reconciliation prepared by the Clerk/RFO, presented at a council meeting and signed by a councillor (who is not a signatory on the account).

Accounting statements comprise Section 2 of Return. They show balance brought forward at start of the year, added to the Precept and all other receipts; from which are subtracted staff costs and all other payments to give the balance at year end.

Bank reconciliation – account reconciled to 31st March, showing any unpresented cheques and any uncredited receipts.

2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
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Internal control is provided by the Clerk/RFO’s finance update at each council meeting, the quarterly reconciliation statements, the minutes of each meeting that record payments, and the half-year Internal Audit. Prevention of fraud is harder to accommodate, but income (precept, newsletter advertising, cemetery burials, grants) is properly accounted for, and all expenditure is supported by a voucher/invoice for each item.

3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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Expenditure decisions are minuted; and we have adopted the required Code of Conduct and Model Publication Scheme. It is mandatory for small councils to publicise all expenditure over £100 under the Transparency Code; we achieve that through the newsletter, minutes and the village website.

4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority’s accounts.</i>
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Electors were provided with the opportunity to exercise their rights by public notice to inspect the 2022/23 accounts before the Return was sent to the External Auditors, and again when it was returned approved by them. Half year audit 23/24 on the website.

5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
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The only conceivable risks are loss of council money (very little of which is held before paying into the bank regularly) and damage to, or caused by, council property. We are fully insured against every conceivable eventuality. Under the new Transparency Code (see 3 above) Risk Assessments have become mandatory.

6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
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Besides the monthly finance statement at meetings, the Clerk/RFO arranges for a quarterly reconciliation of the bank statement, signed by a councillor (see also 1 above). The Internal Auditor also conducted a mid-year audit and check on internal controls (see also 2 above).

7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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There were no issues raised by either Internal or External Audit on the 2022/23 accounts.

8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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We have no claims against us, nor any money on loan.

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	<i>has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

We have no Trust Funds, so not applicable (this is the only statement of the nine where you can say 'NA' instead of 'Yes' or 'No').