Supporting Document

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN CREATED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES TO ACCOMPANY AN AGENDA ITEM

FARNSFIELD
Parish Council

Statement 1

We have approved Standing orders and Financial Regulations but are aware of instances where these were no followed. For example where £30,000 was transferred from reserves into the current account without this being presented for approval at a Full Council Meeting. Our forecasting was inadequate to identify that we needed to transfer money from the reserves in sufficient time to give us 30 day's notice as required by the account we were using. We are working to improve our forecasting, and the council has agreed to open an instant access reserve account as indicated on our internal controls checklist approved on the 10th June 2025 and this is included in the return.

Cheque stubs should have been countersigned by both signatories. These were issued because of the lack of access to the bank account when the previous clerk resigned, which you have been made aware of.

Quarterly bank statements from Rialtas (our accounts software) were not available.

Statement 3

In the year we received notice that we had potentially breached GDPR legislation. This resulted in the council identifying that our current policies and procedures in relation to the Data Protection Act 2018 are inadequate

We have identified the need to undertake a full review of our current policies, procedures and practices and develop a costed and prioritised action plan which will be presented to Full Council during this year. We will also identify this as a high risk in our revised risk scheme.

Statement 5

A review of our risk scheme took place in August 2024 by the research group. This resulted in identifying a new risk around staff security and health and safety, which was reported to Full Council and an action plan agreed and has now been implemented. It was identified during the review that we had potential risks around Finance and Governance which were currently being investigated by the external auditors, and we felt it judicious to await their response before updating this section of our Risk Scheme. Now all feedback has been received it is planned to present a revised risk scheme to full council in October 2025.

Statement 6

There has been inconsistent reporting of our financial position and there has been inaccuracies about the information presented. There have been difficulties in accessing the Rialtas system to enable us to use it to it's full functionality. Now the transfer to income and expenditure is complete we are working with Rialtas to ensure we are able to present timely and accurate reports. This includes planned councillor and clerk training. Internal audit procedures have been put in place, to be signed off by a councillor who is not a signatory on the bank account.

Statement 7

We took action on the issues raised by our internal auditor last year including the transfer from receipts and payments accounts software to income and expenditure accounts software. As of the 31st of March 2025 we had received no external audit report relating to the objections raised for the 2023/24 AGAR so had been unable to implement their suggestions in time for completion of the AGAR in relation to 2024/2025. However this report has now been received and so the issues raised have been reflected in these statements