

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26

- 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 initialed.
- 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 2026
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) **must** be approved before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references, even where approved on the same day.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) **must** certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority **must** in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- 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.
- Additional costs may be incurred if additional audit work is required.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2025) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2026).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor before 1 July 2026

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Internal Audit Report	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2026 been reconciled to Box 8?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

* *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

FARINGTON PARISH COUNCIL (HAMPSHIRE)

Faringdon - PC.GOV.UK

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective

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.	✓		SR REPORT
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			SR REPORT
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")			N/A
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	✓		SR REPORT
P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed), Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: Gordon S Green & CPA
 Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: [Signature]
 Date: 13/5/26

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).
 **Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

FARRINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

Agreed	
Yes	No*

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

*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:

18 06 2026

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE
30/26

Clerk

[Redacted Name]

Chair

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

[Redacted Name]

ENTER NAME OF MEETING HERE
FARRINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

FARRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Notes and guidance	Year ending	
	31 March 2025	31 March 2026
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	172,166	138,008
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	25,000	15,000
3. (+) Total other receipts	6,889	12,349
4. (-) Staff costs	7,978	13,235
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. (-) All other payments	58,069	66,038
7. (=) Balances carried forward	138,008	86,084
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	138,008	86,084
The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash held and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.		
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	126,572	127,643
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	0	0
The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PwLB).		

For Local Councils Only	
Yes	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?	
For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

Date: 18/06/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date: 18th 2026

as recorded in minute reference: 32/26

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were: [Redacted]

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2025/26

In respect of

FARRINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

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

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2026 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 2025/26

(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 2025/26

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 2026

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

CONFLICT OF INTEREST WITH BDO LLP

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


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

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

This was confirmed and minuted at the following meeting:

Date of Meeting	Minute Reference
14th May 2026	3/25 14/26

Signed (Clerk/RFO)  Print Name DEBORAH MARY BATTLE.

Signed (Chair)  Print Name DENISE MARGHALL.

Do the Numbers Limited
13th May 2026

Debbie Batley, Clerk
Farringdon Parish Council

Dear Debbie,

Subject: Review of matters arising from Internal Audit for 31 March 2026

Following my visit with you today, please find below the list of matters arising:

The internal audit was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the [Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015](#) and the guidance and instruction in the [Practitioners Guide 2026](#)

Test	Matter arising	Recommended Action
A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year	
Supplier invoices	The Scribe has the capacity to store invoices as PDF attached to the ledger payment (also raised last year)	From April, invoices should be stored electronically rather than as paper.
Payment listing	The payment listing included in the minutes has not always been derived from the ledger.	The software should always be used to generate complete and timely reports.
B	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for	
Standard documents	The standard documents and policies were not minuted as being approved in the year.	This should be done in advance of approval of the AGAR and annually thereafter.
C	This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these	
Risk assessment and Policies	None of the required documents were minuted as approved in the year.	This should be added to the annual minute schedule.
D	The precept budget resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, the reserves were appropriate	
Earmarked and general reserves	The council has successfully brought forward projects to use reserves to benefit residents.	The general reserve of the council should remain below 12 months of revenue expenditure.
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for	
	The records of the council comply with this test	
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for	
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members we paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied	
Employers NI	The payroll bureau have incorrectly claimed Employment Allowance, resulting in an underpayment to HMRC of £1123.34	The bureau should urgently correct the filings so that the council can meet its legal obligations and a provider better acquainted with council law be sought.
H	Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained	

Eleanor S Greene



Regards,

Please find attached my invoice for the agreed fee. If either you or your members have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Asset additions	The replacement play area and signs and defibrillator need to be added to the asset register before the AGAR is signed.	Please ensure that all asset purchases are tagged as such when added to the ledger.
I	Periodic Bank reconciliations were carried out during the year	
Bank reconciliation and payment listing	The Scribe software creates clear reports with no risk of transcription errors from retyping.	The Scribe reports should be made a page of the signed minutes going forward. (also raised last year)
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis, agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail and debtors and creditors recorded.	
K	The records of the Council comply with this test	
	Certified Exempt in prior year	
	Not applicable to this Council	
L	Transparency Code	
FOIA publication scheme	It is a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act for all councils to populate a model publication scheme	The model scheme can be adapted and adopted from here .
M	Public Rights	
Members DPI forms	There is no link from the Council website to that of the monitoring officer.	The council website should link to the EHDC page .
N	Publication of prior year AGAR	
	The records of the Council comply with this test	
O	Digital and Data Compliance	
Assertion 10 requirements	The council has not yet engaged with these changes and not in compliance by the year end.	A data audit should be carried out, including data stored by members, and repeated each year. An accessibility statement should be added to the home of the website. An IT policy (see Para 5.122 of the PG) should be adopted.
P	Trust Funds	
	Not applicable to this council	