

Annual Governance Statement assertions

Penketh Parish Council.

Assertion 1 — Financial management and preparation of accounting statements

We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. To warrant a positive response to this assertion, the following processes need to be in place and effective:

Penketh Parish Council response:

- Penketh Parish Council has appointed an RFO in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s151, this is currently separate from our Parish Clerk due to the Clerk being newly recruited on the 22nd May 2023 and undergoing training.
- The RFO has migrated the previous year and this year onto Rialtas accounting software, which forms a day to-day cashbook.
- The Clerk/RFO has updated the asset register.
- The Council has a system of internal control to enable the prevention and detection of fraud and to ensure that risk is appropriately managed with the approval and implementation of a Risk Assessment.
- Regular financial reports allow the Council to quantify the amount it has spent in the year, income received, and whether its spending plans for the rest of the year are still affordable.
- The budget is set by a transparent process, via the RFO, Finance Committee and then approval by Full Council. *This year we have failed to provide a regular update to councillors due to issues with Rialtas software and having a new clerk in place, meaning this hasn't been tracked as frequently as possible. Significant spending for this year has now subsided but significant income is now being generated and needs to be closely monitored via our Business and finance committees. Steps are in place to address this and the council is proposing moving its meetings a week forward to allow more time for the RFO to prepare the required statements in a timely manner.*

Assertion 4 — Exercise of public rights

We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Penketh Parish Council response:

- The period of elector's rights was Monday 2nd October to Friday 10th November 2023, which was 30 working days but was later than planned. This was due to delays with Rialtas accounting implementation and the start of our new Clerk at the end of May. Steps are in place to address this moving forward and the information can now be generated quickly and easily by Rialtas.
- Section 1&2 were published on the website unaudited once approved and then the external auditors review was published once received.

Val Waring RFO

Jo Locke Clerk to the council.

Penketh Parish Council.