



Ms J Cadman  
Ewhurst & Ellens Green Parish Council  
Rumbeams Cottage  
Ewhurst Green  
Cranleigh  
Surrey  
GU6 7RR

5<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Dear Joanna

**Re: Ewhurst & Ellens Green Parish Council**  
**Internal Audit Year Ended 31 March 2025 – Interim Audit report**

**Executive summary**

Following completion of our interim internal audit on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 we enclose our report for your kind attention and presentation to the council. The audit was conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines and testing was risk based. Whilst we have not tested all transactions, our samples have where appropriate covered the entire year to date.

Our report is presented in the same order as the assertions on the internal auditor report within the published Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The start of each section details the nature of the assertion to be verified. Testing requirements follow those detailed in the audit plan previously sent to the council, a copy of which is available on request. The report concludes with an opinion as to whether each assertion has been met or not at this point in the year. Some assertions are tested only at the final internal audit, and this is reflected where appropriate in the report. **Recommendations for action are shown in bold text and are summarised in the table at the end of the report.**

Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk.

It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.

It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Ewhurst & Ellens Green Parish Council are well established and followed.

**Regulation**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts. In addition to this, a smaller authority is required by Regulation 5(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to “undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.”

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance activity designed to improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the authority on whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

Internal audit's function is to test and report to the authority on whether its specific system of internal control is adequate and working satisfactorily. The internal audit reports should therefore be made available to all Members to support and inform them when they considering the authority's approval of the annual governance statement.

### Independence and competence

Your audit was conducted by Mark Mulberry of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd, who has over 30 years' experience in the financial sector with the last 14 years specialising in local government.

Your auditor is independent from the management of the financial controls and procedures of the council and has no conflicts of interest with the audit client, nor do they provide any management or financial assistance to the client.

### Engagement Letter

An engagement letter was previously issued to the council covering the 2024/25 internal audit assignment. Copies of this document are available on request.

### Planning and inherent risk assessment

The scope and plan of works including fee structure was issued to the council under separate cover. Copies of this document are available on request. In summary, our work will address each of the internal control objectives as stated on the Annual Internal Audit Report of the AGAR.

It is our opinion that the inherent risk of error or misstatement is low, and the controls of the council can be relied upon and as such substantive testing of individual transactions is not required. Testing to be carried out will be "walk through testing" on sample data to encompass the period of the council year under review.

### Table of contents

		TEST AT INTERIM	TEST AT FINAL	PAGE
A	BOOKS OF ACCOUNT	✓		3
B	FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS	✓	✓	4
C	RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE	✓		5
D	BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES	✓		6
E	INCOME	✓		6
F	PETTY CASH	✓		6
G	PAYROLL	✓	✓	7
H	ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS	✓	✓	7
I	BANK AND CASH	✓	✓	7
J	YEAR END ACCOUNTS		✓	8
K	LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW	✓		10
L	PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION		✓	10
M	EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS – INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS	✓	✓	11
N	PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS	✓	✓	11
O	TRUSTEESHIP	✓		11
	ACHIEVEMENT OF CONTROL ASSERTIONS AT INTERIM AUDIT DATE			12
	INTERIM AUDIT POINTS CARRIED FORWARD			13

## A. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.*

### **Audit findings**

The interim audit was conducted remotely. The Clerk had prepared the requested information advised in advance of the visit, and overall, I have the impression that accounting records are neatly maintained and easily accessible. Other information was reviewed through discussion with the Clerk via email and a review of the council website <https://ewhurstellensgreen-pc.gov.uk/>

The council uses the Rialtas Business Solutions (RBS) accounting package for recording the council's finances. This is an industry specific accounting package and I make no recommendation to change. The system encompasses a simple cashbook. It provides for reconciliation of key control accounts and regular reporting against budget.

A review of the nominal ledger shows there to be no netting off of income and expenditure and items are posted to the heading to which they relate. There is no evidence of excess journal corrections to the accounts.

The system is used to produce management information reports for review at council meetings and is updated regularly with financial information. A review of the cashbook shows that the system is being populated with relevant data, such that a casual reader can understand the nature and scope of the transactions.

There is only one user which could be a risk area in terms of access to the records should the clerk be incapacitated for a period. However, this is small council with no other staff so segregation of duties is not possible.

Every month the bank is reconciled by the clerk and the bank reconciliations and income and expenditure reports are produced for council. Overall I have the impression of a well-ordered secure system.

I tested opening balances as at 1/4/24 showing £2,922.67 and confirmed they could be agreed back to the audited accounts for 2023/24.

The council is not VAT registered, and the last VAT return was for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The reclaim was for £1,772.64.

Overall, I have the impression that the accounting systems are well ordered and routinely maintained and as such I make no recommendation to change. I am of the opinion that the council keeps appropriate records and uses the systems for the purpose for which they are intended.

## B. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS

### **Internal audit requirement**

*This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

#### *Check the publication and minuting of the prior year audited AGAR and notice of conclusion of audit*

The External Auditor's Report was not qualified and is posted to the council website along with the notice of conclusion. This was reported to council on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September. Minute ref 118 (2024) d).

#### *Confirm by sample testing that councillors sign statutory office forms*

I have confirmed by sample testing that councillors sign "Acceptance of Office" forms. The council website provides a link to details of the individual councillor's Register of Members' Interests forms.

#### *Confirm that the council is compliant with GDPR*

The council is fully aware of GDPR and has undergone training. It was noted the council has established common .gov email addresses for all councillors. This is recommended because it gives a natural segregation between work and personal lives, making it clear beyond doubt in what capacity a councillor is acting. In addition to this it gives control to the council, adds a degree of professionalism and in the event of a FOI request limits access to personal computers.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide (March 2023) contains updated guidance on the matter as below:

#### *The importance of secure email systems and GOV.UK*

*5.205. All authorities except parish meetings must now have an official website. To comply with GDPR, councils should provide official email accounts for their councillors as well as for their clerk and other officers.*

*5.206. When choosing a domain name for the council's website and emails, many local council websites are appropriately making use of the official GOV.UK domain (for example, ourparishcouncil.gov.uk), with email addresses being linked to that domain.*

*5.207. Using a GOV.UK domain for your council website and email accounts demonstrates the council's official local government status. Members of the public are increasingly cyber security awareness, so a GOV.UK domain can also help to build trust, and credibility and visibly demonstrates authenticity. Many people will now reasonably expect a local council to have a GOV.UK domain name.*

*5.208. For the purposes of user management, councils should ensure that the proper officer can add and remove member and staff email accounts. Commercial 'dashboard' email and web systems offer centralised searching of all data contained within the system for effective compliance with GDPR Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information Requests.*

The council has a Privacy Notice and Accessibility Statement on its website, and it is clear the council has made every effort to comply with the website requirements.

#### *Confirm that the council meets regularly throughout the year*

In addition to full council there is a planning committee. Full council meets circa 12 times per annum.

#### *Check that agendas for meetings are published giving 3 clear days' notice*

I was able to confirm that at least 3 clear days' notice is given on agendas. Whilst we have not tested every single committee and council meeting there was no evidence of non-compliance in giving three clear days' notice of the meeting. The agendas correctly contain back up documentation.

#### *Check the draft minutes of the last meeting(s) are on the council's website*

Minutes are uploaded to the council website.

**Confirm that the Parish Council's Standing Orders have been reviewed within the last 12 months**

The Standing Orders are based on the current NALC model and were most recently reviewed and adopted by council on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024. 067 (2024)

**Confirm that the Parish Council has adopted and recently reviewed Financial Regulations**

Financial Regulations are based on the current NALC model and were last reviewed and adopted by council on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024. 067 (2024). The regulations contain provisions for the approval of spending, setting of budgets, reconciliation of the bank and reporting to council.

**Check that the council's Financial Regulations are being routinely followed**

The current thresholds in place at which authorisations to spend must be obtained as below:

*FR 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:* • the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT. • the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT. • the council for all items over £5,000; Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

*5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.*

Based on the level of financial activity of the council, and through discussion with the Clerk & the RFO, the authorisation thresholds appear appropriate. **I believe there is a typo in the second bullet point – this should refer to £5,000 otherwise there is an authorisation gap between £2k and £5k. The Clerk has updated this.**

I reviewed the Cashbook for the 6 months ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 to select invoices over £500, and £2k to test approval process.

- 01/05/2024 Turner Security Systems      BACS £3,360.00 CCTV
- 13/06/2024 Turner Security Systems      BACS £3,585.60 EYSC CCTV
- 01/07/2024 Paul Stevens Garden maint      BACS £3,031.75 maintenance
- 23/09/2024 Jennings Surfacing Ltd      BACS £1,386.00 Bowls club car park

On all accounts the clerk was able to demonstrate the correct processes were followed when ordering and that financial regulations were being followed.

**Confirm all section 137 expenditure meets the guidelines and does not exceed the annual per elector limit of £10.81 per elector**

The council does not have the General Power of Competence (GPC). Section 137 expenditure is within thresholds.

**Confirm that checks of the accounts are made by a councillor**

The system noted above details internal review takes place, I am under no doubt that council properly approves expenditure.

**C. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE****Internal audit requirement**

*This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.*

**Audit findings**

The council has a risk assessment policy in place. This contains risks broken down by category, the specific risk identified and the control measures in place.

This type of approach is suitable for a council of this size and demonstrates that the council takes its risk management responsibilities seriously.

I confirmed that the council has a valid insurance policy in place with Hiscox which expires in May 2025. The policy includes Public Liability of £10 million and Employers Liability cover of £10 million each and a Fidelity Guarantee of £250,000 which is sufficient for a council of this size.

#### **D. BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES**

##### **Internal audit requirement**

*The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.*

##### **Audit findings**

The council properly approved the 2023/24 precept on 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2024, minute ref 007 (2024) e). The precept was set at £112,777. This has been agreed to the council bookkeeping records.

The Clerk confirmed that the 2025/26 budget setting process underway with all deadlines achievable.

The Clerk presents the budget performance information to Full Council, where detailed scrutiny of performance against budget is carried out. This provides councillors with sufficient financial information to make informed decisions. At the interim date the council has a deficit of £10,088; however, this will be reversed when the second precept is received. The Budget indicates a breakeven position for the end of the council year end.

In reviewing the budget versus actual report, I am able to confirm, that whilst some individual line items are over budget the cost centre to which they relate in total is within budget and at a level to be expected halfway throughout the year.

At the date of the interim internal audit, the council held circa £113,851 in earmarked reserves spread across four clearly identifiable projects. The council also held circa £15k in the general reserve which will increase when the precept is received.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's guide states '*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 and twelve months of net revenue expenditure*' (para 5.33).

The general reserve balance is within range.

#### **E. INCOME**

##### **Internal audit requirement**

*Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

##### **Audit findings**

Apart from the precept, the council receives income from interest, grants, pitch hire, lettings and burials. Fees and charges were last reviewed and agreed by council and at a meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024. 007 (2024)f

There is no indication that a VAT registration is required.

From a review of the accounting records, income appears to be recorded with sufficient narrative detail to identify the source and allocated to the most appropriate nominal code.

#### **F. PETTY CASH**

##### **Internal audit requirement**

*Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for.*

##### **Audit findings**

The council has no petty cash.

## G. PAYROLL

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.*

### **Audit findings**

The Clerk is the only employee and has a signed contract of employment, based on the NALC template. The salary is not aligned to the NJC scale point range. The council processes the payroll in house, using a computer package.

I reviewed the payslip for month 2 and month 3 and the payroll deductions appear correct. The salary payments are authorised and paid by the council in the same way as other payments.

There are no councillor allowances.

The council has fulfilled its obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

The council has correctly disclaimed the employment allowance.

## H. ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.*

### **Audit findings**

The council has a simple fixed asset register in place which includes details of each asset, date of acquisition, original cost. Assets are correctly listed at cost/proxy cost, or where gifted/donated, given a nominal £1 value for the purpose of the asset register.

The council has no PWLB borrowing.

## I. BANK AND CASH

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.*

### **Audit findings**

*FR 2.6 At least once in each quarter and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair {or a cheque signatory} shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.*

Bank reconciliations are completed on a regular basis, independently checked, and presented to council meetings for review. I reviewed the reconciliations for August to September 2024 presented for the interim audit. I was able to confirm the balances to the bank statements.

I reviewed the minutes for the period from April to September 2024, and noted that bank reconciliations were in evidence on the agenda, as backup documentation and were appropriately minuted.

I am under no doubt that bank reconciliation are being properly carried out in accordance with financial regulations.

As the council's budget does not exceed €500,000, it benefits from protection from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

## J. YEAR END ACCOUNTS

### Internal audit requirement

*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.*

### Audit findings

The council, at its meeting to sign off the year-end accounts, must discuss Section 1 of the AGAR (Annual Governance Statement) and record this activity in the minutes of the meeting. **COUNCIL IS REMINDED THAT THIS MUST BE A SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF SECTION 2 OF THE AGAR (ANNUAL ACCOUNTS).**

### Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement

Based on the internal audit finding I recommend using the table below as the basis for that discussion.

	Annual Governance Statement	'Yes', means that this authority	Suggested response based on evidence
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>	<b>YES</b> – accounts follow latest Accounts and Audit Regulations and practitioners guide recommendations.
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>	<b>YES</b> – there is regular reporting of financial transactions and accounting summaries, offering the opportunity for scrutiny.
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>	<b>YES</b> – the Clerk advises the council in respect of its legal powers.
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>	<b>YES</b> – the requirements and timescales for 2023/24 year-end were met
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>	<b>YES</b> – the council has a risk management scheme and appropriate external insurance.
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>	<b>YES</b> – the council has appointed an independent and competent internal auditor.
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>	<b>YES</b> – matters raised in internal and external audit reports have been addressed.
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	<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>	<b>YES</b> – no matters were raised during the internal audit visits.



	authority and. Where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.		
9	Trust funds including charitable – In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/asset(s), including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	<i>has met all its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>	N/A – the council has no obligations

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements

AGAR box number		2022/23	2023/24	Internal Auditor notes
1	Balances brought forward	57,090	79,003	Agrees to 2022/23 carry forward (box 7)
2	Precept or rates and levies	100,338	105,000	Figure confirmed to central precept record
3	Total other receipts	69,459	68,294	Agrees to underlying accounting records
4	Staff costs	32,707	32,304	Agrees to underlying accounting records. Includes only expenditure allowed as staff costs (see section G)
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Confirmed to PWLB documents
6	All other payments	115,177	114,132	Agrees to underlying accounting records
7	Balances carried forward	79,003	105,861	Casts correctly and agrees to balance sheet

8	Total value of cash and short-term investments	79,003	105,861	Agrees to bank reconciliation for all accounts
9	Total fixed assets plus long-term investments and assets	813,081	813,081	Matches asset register total and changes from previous year have been traced
10	Total borrowings	0	0	Confirmed to PWLB documents

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A		
11a	Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable)		✓		<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b	Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable)			✓	<i>The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

### Audit findings

The year-end accounts have been correctly prepared on a receipts and payments basis with no requirement for the box 7 and 8 reconciliation.

The AGAR correctly casts and cross casts and last year's comparatives match the figures submitted for 2021/22.

## K. LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW

### **Internal audit requirement**

*IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick “not covered”)*

### **Audit findings**

The council did not certify itself exempt in 2023/24 due to exceeding the income and expenditure limits and this test does not apply.

## L: PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

### **Internal audit requirement**

*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*

### **Audit findings**

At present no specific guidance has been provided to set out what the ‘relevant legislation’ is in respect of Control Objective L. We have therefore considered the requirements of Statutory Instruments 2015/480 The Local Government (Transparency Requirements) Regulations 2015 [<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/480/made/data.pdf>] and, 2015/494 The Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements). [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/494/pdfs/uksem\\_20150494\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/494/pdfs/uksem_20150494_en.pdf)

In addition to this, we have considered the additional publication requirements as set out in the ICO Model Publication Scheme for Parish Councils. <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1153/model-publication-scheme.pdf> & [https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1266/parish\\_council\\_information\\_guide.doc](https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1266/parish_council_information_guide.doc)

The council does not have income and expenditure in excess of £200k and as such is not required to follow the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

The council has a publication Scheme in place.

All councils are required to follow The Accounts and Audit Regulations which include the following requirements:

**13(1)** An authority must publish (which must include publication on that authority’s website)

- (a) the Statement of Accounts together with any certificate or opinion entered by the local auditor in accordance with section 20(2) of the Act; and
- (b) the Annual Governance Statement approved in accordance with regulation 6(3)

**13(2)** Where documents are published under paragraph (1), the authority must

- (a) keep copies of those documents for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum; and
- (b) ensure that those documents remain available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which those documents were first published in accordance with that paragraph.

I was able to confirm that pages 4 (Annual Governance Statement), 5 (Accounting Statements) and 6 (External Auditor’s Report and Certificate) of the AGAR are available for review on the council website for financial years 2019/20 to 2023/24 inclusive

**M: EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS - INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2024 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*

**Audit findings**

Inspection – key dates	2023/24 Actual
Date AGAR signed by council	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Date inspection notice issued	21 <sup>st</sup> June 2023
Inspection period begins	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Inspection period ends	4 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Correct length (30 working days)	Yes
Common period included (first 10 working days of July)	Yes

I am satisfied the requirements of this control objective were met for 2023/24, and assertion 4 on the Annual Governance Statement can therefore be signed off by the council.

**N: PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24. 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.*

**Audit findings**

I was able to confirm that the Notice of Public Rights is published on the council website along with the Notice of Conclusion of audit and External Auditor Report and I was able to confirm that the publication requirements for 2023/24 have been met.

**O. TRUSTEESHIP****Internal audit requirement**

*Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.*

**Audit findings**

The council has no trusts.

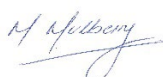
**Achievement of control assertions at interim audit date**

Based on the tests conducted during the interim audit, our conclusions on the achievement of the internal control objectives are summarised in the table below. A further review and update of this opinion will be conducted at the final audit.

	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 assesses 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			✓ None
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. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			✓ 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	The authority, during the previous year (2022-23) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	✓		
N	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR.	✓		
O	Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓ N/A

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Mark Mulberry**  
Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd

**Final Audit 2023/24 - Points Carried Forward**

<b>Audit Point</b>	<b>Audit Findings</b>	<b>Council comments</b>
<b>Fixed assets</b>	<p><i>FR 14.3 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.</i></p> <p><b>I recommend this regulation is reviewed and the asset register updated appropriately over the course of the next council year.</b></p>	Completed

**Interim Audit 2024/25 - Points Carried Forward****None**