## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- 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 initialled.
- 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 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- 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 as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **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.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten 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 2025.**

| **Completion checklist** – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements | | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| All sections | Have all highlighted boxes have been completed? | ✔ | |
| | Has all additional information requested, including **the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights**, been provided for the external auditor? | ✔ | |
| Internal Audit Report | Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided? | ✔ | |
| Section 1 | For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published? | ✔ | |
| Section 2 | Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval? | ✔ | |
| | Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting? | ✔ | |
| | Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required? | ✔ | |
| | Has the bank reconciliation as at **31 March 2025** been reconciled to Box 8? | ✔ | |
| | Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided? | ✔ | |
| 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. | | |

***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**

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

Graveley Parish Council
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 2025, that:

| | Agreed | | 'Yes' means that this authority: |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 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 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. | ✔ | | *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.* |

| | Yes | No | N/A | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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. | | | ✔ | *has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.* |

***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:

07/05/2025
DATE AGREED

and recorded as minute reference:

25/26-27
MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

https://www.graveleycambspc.org.uk/
ENTER AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

Graveley Parish Council

| | Year ending | | Notes and guidance |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 31 March 2024 £ | 31 March 2025 £ | *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 | 26,439 | 28,557 | *Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.* |
| **2.** (+) Precept or Rates and Levies | 10,587 | 11,084 | *Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.* |
| **3.** (+) Total other receipts | 12,863 | 25,391 | *Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.* |
| **4.** (-) Staff costs | 4,244 | 4,289 | *Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.* |
| **5.** (-) Loan interest/capital repayments | 0 | 0 | *Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).* |
| **6.** (-) All other payments | 17,088 | 20,251 | *Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).* |
| **7.** (=) Balances carried forward | 28,557 | 40,492 | *Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).* |
| **8.** Total value of cash and short term investments | 28,557 | 40,492 | *The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – **To agree with bank reconciliation.*** |
| **9.** Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets | 15,505 | 15,505 | *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 | N/A | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **11a.** Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable) | | ✔ | | *The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.* |
| **11b.** Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable) | | | ✔ | *The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.* |

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 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**

S Phillips

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 07/05/2025

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

07/05/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

25/26-28

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED