

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

HARWORTH & BIRCOTES TOWN 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 2024, 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.
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	N/A
			✓

***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:

17/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

17609 MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

G. J. EVANS

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

L. J. EVANS

HTTP://harworthandbircotes.towncouncil.org.uk

Explanation for a 'No' response on No.4 of the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24

Assertion 4: We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of elector's rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations

Explanation 1: The RFO correctly provided the correct 30 days for the exercise of elector's right from 5th June 2023 to 14th July 2023 ; however, there was confusion with the wording for the starting of the 30 days following the date of announcement on the 23rd May 2023.

The RFO read that – ‘ (a) *insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date (c)* which was the 24 June) meant it was to be at least one clear day between the two dates; the Internal Auditor explained that it meant the day following the announcement.

Next Steps: For 2023-24 and future years, it is noted that the commencement dates should start the day after the date of the announcement notice publication.

Explanation 2: Following the receipt of the External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2022-23; the RFO submitted it to be put on the website on the 8th August 2023 (the deadline being 30th September 2023). Unfortunately, this didn't happen, and the website had not been checked and a screen print taken, which is what usually happens.

Next Steps: The website is currently undergoing an update with a more user-friendly way to put documents on the site. This will then allow the RFO to put the items on the website herself instead of relying on 3rd parties.