

Local council name: West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council

Notice of appointment of date for the exercise of public rights

Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, and
The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (SI 234)

1. Date of announcement: 26th July 2020 (a) 2. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounts to be audited and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them. For the year ended 31 March 2020 these documents will be available on reasonable notice on application to: <i>Mark Ramshaw – Parish Clerk / RFO</i> 62 Trevelyan Place Peterlee SR8 2NL Tel: 07900800540 Email: westraintonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk commencing on (c) 28th July 2020 and ending on (d) 8th September 2020 3. Local Government Electors and their representatives also have: • the opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts; and • the right to make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the Council(f). The auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose during the inspection period at 2 above. 4. The audit is being conducted under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and the National Audit Office' Code of Audit Practice. Your audit is being carried out by: Mazars LLP, SalvusHouse, Aykley Heads, Durham, DH1 5TS 5. This announcement is made by (e) <i>Mark Ramshaw - Parish Clerk</i>	(a) Insert date of placing of this notice on your website. (b) Insert name, position and contact details of the Clerk or other person to whom any person may apply to inspect the accounts. (c) And (d) The inspection period must be 30 working days in total <u>and commence no later than 1 September 2020.</u> (e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice
--	--

Councils' Accounts: A Summary of Public Rights

The basic position

By law any interested person has the right to inspect a council's/meeting's accounts. If you are entitled and registered to vote in local council elections then you (or your representative) have additional rights to ask the appointed auditor questions about the council's accounts or object to an item of account contained within them.

The right to inspect the accounts

When your council has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year it must advertise that they are available for people to inspect. Having given the council reasonable notice of your intentions, you then have 30 working days to look through the accounting statements in the Annual Return and any supporting documents. By arrangement, you will be able to inspect and make copies of the accounts and the relevant documents. You may have to pay a copying charge.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounts

You can only ask the appointed auditor questions about the accounts. The auditor does not have to answer questions about the council's policies, finances, procedures or anything else not related to the accounts. Your questions must be about the accounts for the financial year just ended. The auditor does not have to say whether they think something the council has done, or an item in its accounts, is lawful or reasonable.

The right to object to the accounts

If you think that the council has spent money that it should not have, or that someone has caused a loss to the council deliberately or by behaving irresponsibly, you can request the auditor to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law. You do this by sending a formal '*notice of objection*' to the auditor at the address below. **The notice must be in writing and copied to the council.** In it, you must tell the auditor why you are objecting and what you want the auditor to do about it. The auditor must reach a decision on your objection. If you are not happy with that decision, you can appeal to the courts.

You may also object if you think that there is something in the accounts that the auditor should discuss with the council or tell the public about in a '*public interest report*'. You must follow the same procedure as outlined in the previous paragraph. The auditor must then decide whether to take any action. The auditor does not have to, but usually will, give reasons for his/her decision and you cannot appeal to the courts. More information is available on the National Audit Office website (see contact details below).

You may not use this '*right to object*' to make a personal complaint or claim against your council. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or your solicitor. You may also be able to approach the Standards Committee of your local principal authority if you believe that a member of the council has broken the Code of Conduct for Members.

What else you can do

Instead of objecting, you can give the auditor information that is relevant to his/her responsibilities. For example, you can simply tell the auditor if you think that something is wrong with the accounts or about waste and inefficiency in the way the council runs its services. You should make it clear that you are providing information rather than making a formal objection. You do not have to follow any set time limits or procedures. The auditor does not have to give you a detailed report of any subsequent investigation, but will usually tell you the outcome.

A final word

Councils, and so local taxpayers, must meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved. The auditor will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. If you appeal to the courts, you might have to pay for the action yourself.

Who should you contact?

For more detailed guidance on electors' rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication ***Council Accounts – a guide to your rights*** are available by calling the National Audit Office on 020 7798 7000 or downloading from the website <https://www.nao.org.uk/>

If you wish to contact your Council's appointed external auditor please write to:

Cameron Waddell, Partner, Mazars LLP,
local.councils@mazars.co.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

AND LEAMSIDGE
WEST RAINTON PARISH COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 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	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	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 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. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			☒
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 and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	☒		
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 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")			☒
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	☒		
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	☐	☐	☒

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

02/07/20

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

ANNETTE SIMPSON

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

AES-i

Date 02/07/20

*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to 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 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

WEST RAINTON A PARISH COUNCIL
AND LEAMSIDE

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 2020, 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.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
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>
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>
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>
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>
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>
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>
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.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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
			✓
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*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:

16/07/20

and recorded as minute reference:

ITEM 8

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

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)
Authority web address

WESTRAINTON, PARISH, DURHAM, GOV, UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

WEST RANTON AND LEAMSIDE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	17729	25138	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	33665	34947	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	16799	18150	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	11142	9783	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	31913	28916	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	25138	39536	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	25138	39536	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	11231	11152	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).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.
		X	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 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

MRayhan

16/07/20

Date

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

16/07/20

as recorded in minute reference:

ITEM 8

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

[Signature]

Explanation of significant variances in the accounting statements - Section 2

Local council name: West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

Please explain any variances of more than 15% between the totals for individual boxes in Section 2. We do not require explanations for variances of less than £200; however, in some cases there may be 'compensating' variances which leave the overall total for a box relatively unchanged – e.g. where there was a major one-off project in one year (e.g. contribution to village hall extension of £30,000), but a totally different expense of a similar size in the next (e.g. purchase of playground equipment of £28,000). In such cases, it would be helpful to provide an explanation of movements within each box. **We also ask you to explain any change where there is a movement to or from zero.** Please either use the proforma below, or complete a separate schedule if more space is required.

Section 2	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	Variance (+/-) £	Detailed explanation of variance (for each reason noted please include monetary values (to nearest £10))
Box 2 <i>Precept</i>	33665	34947	1282	The variance is £1282 which equates to an increase of around 4%.
Box 3 <i>Other income</i>	16799	18150	1351	This represents a variance in income of £1351 from the previous year which equates to an increase of around 8%.
Box 4 <i>Staff costs</i>	11142	9783	1359	The variance is £1359 which equates to a decrease of around 12%.
Box 5 <i>Loan interest/ capital</i>	N/A	N/A		WRPC does not have any loans
Box 6 <i>Other payments</i>	31913	28916	2977	This represents a variance of £2977 which equates to a decrease of around 9%.
Box 7 <i>Balances carried forward</i>	25138	39536	14398	£14398 variance which equates to a 57% increase. Variance on balances carried forward from last year of £14,398, represents net surplus for the year. This was £13,012 more than the budgeted surplus forecast of £1386. The £13,012 reflects underspend of £11,981 and additional net receipts of £1031. The latter includes additional burial income of £1468. £8190 of the large underspend related to the Planting Plan has been carried forward to 2020/21. The revised budgeted surplus for the year of £1,386 would have resulted in total balances/reserves of £26,524, compared with £25138 last year. An increase of 5.5%. This was primarily due to the Council's decision to increase the precept by 3% above that of 2018/19 to cover unforeseen expenditure and ensure that the general reserve remained at an appropriate level going forward.

				The total balance carried forward of £39,536 is made up of earmarked reserves: <table><tr><td>Cemetery</td><td>9633</td></tr><tr><td>Elections 2021</td><td>4000</td></tr><tr><td>Balance of DCC Grant Funding</td><td>1700</td></tr><tr><td>£5000 Hargreaves Grant Funding</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>For Planting Plan</td><td>5000</td></tr></table> These total £20,333 and a general reserve balance of £19,203 to carry forward. A revised budget, reflecting planned expenditure from 2019/20 carried forward, the use of earmarked reserves and general reserves brought forward was reported to Parish Council at its June meeting.	Cemetery	9633	Elections 2021	4000	Balance of DCC Grant Funding	1700	£5000 Hargreaves Grant Funding		For Planting Plan	5000
Cemetery	9633													
Elections 2021	4000													
Balance of DCC Grant Funding	1700													
£5000 Hargreaves Grant Funding														
For Planting Plan	5000													
Box 9 <i>Fixed assets & long term assets</i>	11231	11152	79	£79 variance which equates to a decrease of 7%. This was due to the disposal of the small filing cabinet.										
Box 10 <i>Total borrowing</i>	N/A	N/A		WRPC does not have any borrowing										

