

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 2026

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

1. Date of announcement: **3rd June 2026**
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 2026 these documents will be available on reasonable notice on application to:

West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council

62 Trevelyan Place, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 2NL

Telephone: 07368964142

Email: clerk@westraintonandleamsidepc.gov.uk

commencing on **4th June 2026**

and ending on **15th July 2026**

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 Authority (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 auditor's limited assurance review 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 review is being carried out by:

Forvis Mazars LLP, Newcastle Office via 30 Old Bailey, London, EC4M 7AU

Email: local.councils@mazars.co.uk

5. This announcement is made by: **Mark Ramshaw, Parish Clerk/RFO**

Annette E Simpson - Financial Services

6th May 2026

Audit Services for West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council

The above internal audit has been conducted by the Local Councils Audit Commission. I have acted independently and carried out relevant assessments on the procedures and controls expected of West Rainton Parish Council during the financial year ended 31st March 2026.

I believe this statement of accounts presents fairly the financial position of West Rainton parish Council and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2026.

Notes to the Accounts - items not covered.

Section K - Not covered as the authority did not certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25.

Kind regards



Annette Simpson
06/05/26

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

WEST RANTON AND LEAMSIDE PARISH COUNCIL

www.westrantonandleamsidepc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 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	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. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all 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 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 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")			N/C
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. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	✓		
P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			N/A

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

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

04/05/2026

06/05/2026

ANNETTE SIMPSON

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

ASJ

Date

06/05/2026

*If the response is 'no' please 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 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

WEST RAINTON AND LEAMSIDE PARISH 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 2026, 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 have assured 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.	☐	☐	☒ <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>
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.	☒	☐	<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</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:

21/05/2026

and recorded as minute reference:

15

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

Chair

Clerk

A. S. Diggory
M. Ray
www.westraintonandleamsidepc.gov.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

WEST RAINTON AND LEASIDE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	66795	81944	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. 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	39618	41483	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	11490	11491	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	7467	7781	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	28493	39817	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	81944	87321	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	81944	87321	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	39988	41092	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	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?		✓	For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 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.

M. Ray

01/05/2026

Date

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

21/05/2026

as recorded in minute reference:

15

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

D. D. Dingy

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 Form 3

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

Explanation to 'No' Response for Q4.

From the 2024/25 External Audit:

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require that the Authority publishes Sections 1 and 2, a declaration that the status of the statement of accounts is 'unaudited' and a statement that sets out details of how public rights can be exercised on a free to access website (Item 1.28). This requirement has not been met for the 2024/25 accounts. In future, the Council needs to ensure that it can always meet its statutory obligations in relation to publishing accounts and advertising public rights. It should also mark the assertion regarding providing proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights as "No" when completing the 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Parish Clerk response:

The document with the Exercise Of Public Rights information required, which included the unaudited AGAR and the internal audit was uploaded to our website at the correct time for the correct period.

I noticed an error on the postcode for the contact details. It was left on the website with the error for a week but I then decided to get that page updated. I uploaded the revised page which took the place of the existing document.

Unfortunately I just posted that document which was just the single sheet with the correct post code with none of the supporting information. This was picked up by the external auditor and I was advised that we should state 'no' for Q4.