

Explanations regarding the Section 1 of the Annual Return 31/3/2016

Questions 1,2, 4,5,6 &7 were all answered No on the Annual governance Statement of 2015/16

On 22/4/2015, the previous Clerk/RFO resigned and no other Clerk or RFO was appointed until August 2016. This was coupled with the council becoming inquorate in May. The District Council appointed 3 district councillors to serve on the council in January however the first meeting was not until March 2015 and did not have an experienced Clerk or RFO. The agenda and minutes were written by the councillors.

Without being quorate and without a Clerk/RFO, the Council could not have put together arrangements for effective financial management (item 1) nor could they maintain any adequate system of internal control (item2). Until March, there were no financial transactions as the approvals and signatures could not be made.

Regarding item 4, as the accounts were not submitted for 2014/15 (for which a PIR has been issued and accepted), there was no opportunity for the exercise of electors rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. This is also the reason for the No reply to item 7.

Regarding item 5, no risk analysis was carried out, again due to lack of Clerk/RFO and inquorate Council and for similar reasons, no adequate or effective system of internal audit was maintained (item 6).

Clerk to Walberswick Parish Council 24/8/16

Explanations regarding the Section 2 of the Annual Return 31/3/2016

As described previously, on 22/4/2015, the previous Clerk/RFO resigned and no other Clerk or RFO was appointed until August 2016. This was coupled with the council becoming inquorate in May. The District Council appointed 3 district councillors to serve on the council in January however the first meeting was not until March 2015 and did not have an experienced Clerk or RFO. The agenda and minutes were written by the councillors.

2 – Precepts or Rates or Levies

The precept was significantly lower at £8000 as opposed to £ 12,184 in 2015. As I understand it, Walberswick had incurred significantly higher costs for Clerks due to the hours required. I have found this item 7 in the minutes of 4th November 2013.

The precept was discussed taking into account the size of reserves, that there are proposals to make raising the level of precept more difficult, that the Parish Council was financially now more stable and that there was a desire not to over-reduce the precept for 2014-15.

Proposal – Set precept for 2014-15 to £12000.00, a £4000.00 (25%) reduction.

All Agreed

The following year on 1st December 2014 the following item 6 of the minutes states

Taking into account the large reserves of cash which WPC held it seemed possible to allocate £9,000 to Revenue spending for the benefit of the village and to reduce the precept to £8,000. The clerk was instructed to redraft the budget in accordance with the above points and send the revised draft to Councillors.

3 – Total other receipts

The other receipts was greater in 2014/15 as there were donations and other income as well as rents and wayleaves which were not received in 2015/16. I have attached the unaudited Receipts and Payment schedule prepared by the previous RFO for year ending 31/3/15.

4. – Staff costs

No staff costs were incurred in 2015/16. The RFO/Clerk who left in April did not draw a salary. There was then no replacement in the financial year

6. - All other payments

As council was not quorate until March 2016, only a minimum amount of council business was transacted and therefore the bulk of the administration costs were not incurred. I have attached the transactions for 2015/16.

8.- Total Value of Cash and short term investments.

As there were only a limited amount of payments made which was not as budgeted in 2014, the receipt of the precept of £8000 significantly increased the banks accounts.

Clerk to Walberswick Parish Council 24/8/2016