

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

SADDLEWORTH 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 2022, 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
			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:

Mon 25/7/22

and recorded as minute reference:

3309

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

Chairman

Clerk

Alan Payne

Heather Dutton

www.saddleworthparishcouncil.org.uk

Saddleworth Parish Council

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Explanations for 'No' Responses to Statement Items 1 and 4.

1. *Statement 1 : We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year and for the preparation of the accounting statements.*

Key finance personnel suffered Covid during the audit preparation period which delayed the start of the Internal Audit. Soon after the Audit started SPC then experienced serious IT issues including loss of internet access, loss of the email facility, loss of scan and print facilities, an unstable server which compromised Office applications such as Excel and Word and loss of WIFI. Our external provider BT took over 7 weeks to rectify the problems which ultimately resulted in the submission deadline of Friday 1st July 2022 being missed.

The deadline was extended by 4 weeks to Friday 29th July 2022 by which time the External Audit documentation was submitted to the Auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP. The requisite (Unaudited) documents have also been published on the SPC website together with the 'Public Rights' Notice which will allow public scrutiny of all documents for at least 30 working days.

Assuming similar problems beyond our control do not reoccur next year, it is anticipated that all publication and submission deadlines will be met on time.

2. *Statement 4 : We provided proper opportunity during the year for exercise of electors rights in accordance with the requirements of Accounts and Audit Regulations.*

The deadline for Audit submission was missed last year for various reasons which necessitates a 'No' for statement 4.

The requisite documents for 2020-21 were however published on the SPC website together with the 'Public Rights' Notice which allowed public scrutiny of all documents for at least 30 working days.