

<p>We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.</p>	<p>The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion as from 1 April through to September 2024 there were not arrangements in place for effective financial management. Policies, procedures and practices were implemented from September 2024; a cashbook, a bank reconciliation in the form of an excel spreadsheet, publication of all income and expenditure in the minutes, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were updated to reflect legislative changes, the appointment of a suitably qualified Clerk and RFO, Councillor training, the introduction of internal control measures including the appointment of Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils as Internal Auditor. Due to the extent of mismanagement, the Parish Council are still in the process of implementing policies as reflected by the Internal Auditor in her most recent report dated May 2025.</p>
<p>We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.</p>	<p>The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion as until September 2024, there were no internal controls in place to prevent or detect fraud or corruption. The Parish Council now has effective controls including the publication of all income and expenditure, routine monthly checks by Parish Councillors of invoices against the bank statements, cashbook, and bank reconciliations. The Parish Council has not yet put in place dual banking authorisation but this is being explored with an application to Unity Bank who offer this service. The effectiveness of the internal controls implemented later in the 2024/25 financial year were reviewed by the Finance Committee on 13 March 2025 and again by the Parish Council on 7 April 2025 and were agreed to be effective. LALC were again appointed as internal auditor on 31 March 2025 for the 2025/26 financial year.</p>
<p>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 significant financial effect on the ability of the authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.</p>	<p>The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion. In April 2024, the purchase of Star Fen was finalised and it was this issue among others that led to the investigation by the authority, further to the submission and complaints raised about the 2023/24 AGAR. There is sufficient evidence, as reviewed by PKF Littlejohn, to suggest that the Chair acted without the prior knowledge and consent of the Parish Council as a corporate body in relation to the valuation, instruction of solicitors and ultimately the purchase of Star Fen; The Parish Council ignored Financial Regulations. That being said, the Parish Council now receives advice from a suitably trained Clerk and RFO, the Parish Council are members of LALC and the Parish Council represents openness and transparency.</p>
<p>We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the</p>	<p>The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion. The Public Right's Period was not upheld as the Clerk was not a work during this time. The public did not have the opportunity to review the documents between 17 June and 26 July 2024 as publicised. The locum now Clerk offered members of the public this</p>

requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	opportunity by opening a second window in September although it is acknowledged that the Public Right's Period could not formally be extended.
We carried out an assessment of the risk facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion. The Parish Council did not have in place a risk register. There were no effective internal controls. The external insurance cover was deemed to be insufficient as the asset register was incomplete and out of date. The Parish Council have since adopted a risk register, updated the asset register and have internal controls in place. The Parish Council is in the process of consulting with their insurance broker to ensure that the policy of insurance which renews at the end of July provides adequate coverage.
We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion. The Parish Council had appointed an accountant to conduct the internal audit. Their checks only covered financial transactions and did not investigate financial governance. The Parish Council did not review the effectiveness of the system of internal audit. In September 2024, the Parish Council agreed to appoint the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils to conduct the internal audit for 2024/25 and in March 2025, for 2025/26. Their internal audit checks not only financial transactions but financial governance and an assessment has been made for the 2024/25 financial year as to the effectiveness of the audit process.
We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'yes' to this assertion. The internal auditor appointed in 2023/24 did not provide a report. There was therefore nothing to action. The external audit report was received in May 2025. The Parish Council accepts the findings of that report. The Parish Council has prepared and published a Notice of Conclusion of Audit. This is available on social media, the village noticeboards, and the Parish Council website. Copies of the published AGAR and associating certificates and documentation will be retained and publicly accessible for five years.
We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during of after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	The Parish Council have resolved to respond 'no' to this assertion. The Parish Council did not consider the impact that the purchase of the land would have in terms of the impact on financial reserves, insurance liabilities and public interest. The repercussions of this will be felt well into the 2025/26 financial year. Since September 2024, the Parish Council have put in place robust measure to ensure that this does not happen again.

