CONSTANTINE PARISH COUNCIL

It is a requirement for the Council to approve the following and record that approval as a council minute.

Statement of Assurance (Agenda Item 10)

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

which means that the Council has prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations

Proposed answer YES

This has all been done: a budget was prepared in December 2016 prior to setting the precept; an internal auditor was appointed at the Annual Meeting in May 2017; the Parish Clerk was appointed as the Responsible Financial Officer when he joined the Council in 2007; no cheques have been issued without being authorised by the full Council; every month a 'snapshot' of the Council's financial position to date showing what has been spent and what has been received in the year to date and a bank reconciliation has been made available to Councillors;

2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

which means that the Council made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge

Proposed answer YES

The Parish Council maintains a bank account solely for Parish Council purposes; all cheques require two signatures; both the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations documents were re-adopted at the Annual meeting in May 2017; no cash sums change hands; PAYE is deducted from employees' salaries and paid to HMRC using its Basic PAYE Tools RTI computer programme; VAT is reclaimed from HMRC on an annual basis; the Council has no loans or long-term liabilities.

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 smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.

which means that the Council has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with proper practices in doing so

Proposed answer YES

The Clerk has advised the Council if a proposed course of action is *ultra vires;* donations are made using the appropriate power (including the Power of Competence which was adopted at the Annual Meeting in May 2017)

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.

which means that the Council during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts

Proposed answer YES

A notice was posted both on the parish notice-boards and on the web-site offering electors the opportunity to inspect the accounts in full; a copy of the unaudited Annual Return was published on the Parish Council's web pages as was a copy of the audited Return.

PLEASE TURN OVER

5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

which means that the Council considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly

Proposed answer YES

PAYE deductions and VAT refunds are paid and reclaimed promptly and within the time limits set by HMRC; the Council's risk on all fronts (Public Liability, Fidelity Guarantee, buildings, work done by volunteers) is covered by under its Insurance policy which is reviewed on an annual basis usually in March; the Council readopted its Risk Assessment document at the Annual Meeting in May

6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.

which means that the Council 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.

Proposed answer YES

Peter Richards acts as the Council's Internal Auditor; he was Kerrier District Council's Senior Auditor and holds the following qualifications Practitioner with the Institute of Internal Auditors, Fellow Member of the Association of Accounting Technicians Diploma in Management Studies

7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

which means that the Council responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit

Proposed answer YES

No matters were raised either by the Internal Auditor or by the External Auditor

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 smaller authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.

which means that we have disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant

Proposed answer YES