



## Willaston Parish Council

### Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 (section 1)

### Explanation for “No” to item 10 Response to Assertion 10 and “No” to item 4 Public Rights.

This document has been prepared to accompany Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26, Annual Governance Statement.

**Assertion 10** requires the council to confirm that it has made suitable arrangements for IT and data management in accordance with the proper practises during the year under review.

The 2025 practitioners guide requirements for assertion 10 include e-mail management, website accessibility and having an IT policy in place. The guidance also links these requirements to wider digital and data management obligations including data protection, Freedom of Information, transparency and the secure handling of council information.

Williston parish council has met the wider assertion 10 arrangements in particular the council has:

- Approved and published an Accessibility Statement, March 2026.
- Approved and published the updated Data Protection Policy (Privacy Policy), March 2026.
- Adopted and published a new IT policy, Feb 2026.
- Resolved to proceed with Aubergine as the new website provider and to register the gov.uk domain and to host all council email addresses on the new domain, March 2026.
- The Council has maintained a website for the publication of Council information.
- Continued to publish required information on the council website including AGAR and Governance information
- maintained arrangements for data protection and information governance
- maintained arrangements for dealing with Freedom of Information and subject access requests

- used scribe to support financial records and administer the council's allotments.
- Maintained appropriate arrangements for the storage and handling of council records

The council's website arrangements are relevant to assertion 10 because council websites are expected to meet the required accessibility standards and have an up-to-date accessibility statement. Websites should meet WCAG 2.2 AA standards and comply with the public sector bodies accessibility regulations where applicable.

The council's IT policy arrangements are also relevant for session 10. Small authorities should have an IT policy which explains how clerks, members and others use other users should conduct authority business and securely and legally when using it equipment and software paragraph the council has taken steps to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for it and data management.

The council has answered “No” to assertion 10 for 2025/26. The Internal Auditor adding a disclaimer to the Annual Audit Report in the relevant section. Our current website does not meet the accessibility requirement so we are moving to a new website that will.

We also recognise that for the year 2025/26 Councillors have used personal e-mail addresses for council related business. The issue of email addresses has now been addressed and that all members will now only use a council issued email address. The Clerk has always used a dedicated email address hosted on our domain but that this has now been changed to a gov.uk email.

### **Audit Regulations**

Our published Period for the Exercise of Public Rights (2024/25) was incorrect as it gave a period of 31 days. This was due to a mis-calculation. We have checked our calculation for this year (2025/26)