CLASSIFICATION: PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION: FINANCE AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING **Wednesday 11th June 2025**
AUTHOR Sam Frake, Responsible Financial Officer

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Each year every parish and town council is statutorily required to produce an annual governance and accountability return. This is similar to a company's annual accounts. The return is filled in by the internal auditor based on information provided to them as part of the internal audit process.

1.2 Full Council is required to confirm the production of the document, and authorise the Mayor and Clerk to sign relevant pages. This is scheduled to occur at the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 18 June 2025. However it is conventional for a subordinate committee to have a more in-depth discussion on the documents with a view to providing a recommendation to the Full Council.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That the Finance and Compliance Committee **RECOMMEND** to Full Council to:

(i) **NOTE** Page 3 (Internal Audit Report 2024/25) of the AGAR (Annex A) and standalone Internal Audit Report (Annex B)
(ii) **AUTHORISE** the Mayor and Clerk to sign Page 4 (Governance Statement) of the AGAR (Annex A)
(iii) **AUTHORISE** the Mayor and Clerk to sign Page 5 (the Accounting Statement) of the AGAR (Annex A), **NOTING** additional information provided in Annex A1 and the Fixed Asset Register (Annex C)
(iv) **AGREE** that the dates of the period for the Exercise of Public Rights be confirmed as 20th June 2025 – 31st July 2025 (Annex D)
(v) **NOTE** that any concerns and issues should be raised during the Exercise of Public Rights' window in order to avoid additional costs being incurred by the Town Council from the External Auditor.

3 Background and Explanation

3.1 As with most organisations, the Council is required to go through an end of financial year process. As a Town Council, this process is within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) framework.

3.2 The format, timetable and auditing elements are dictated to by legislation. Unfortunately for a parish/town council the size and complexity of Hatfield this framework is not practical for the financial management of the organisation, and therefore we have a separate financial management and internal reporting framework which is more aligned to how we operate.

4 Impacts

Legal

4.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts. Guidance is provided by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel who have published the a Practitioners' Guide (March 2024) which can be found on the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) website: https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/practitioners-guide-2025.html.

4.2 Failure to complete, authorise and publish the AGAR would result in the Town Council being issued with a 'Public Interest Report' by the appointed external auditors and fined.

Finance

4.3 There are no financial implications to the review, agreement and reporting of the AGAR. However there is a penalty should the Town Council fail to abide by its statutory obligations.

Risk

4.4 As well as financial penalties, there would be significant reputation risk to the Town Council and to Councillors should the Council fail to publish and submit a completed AGAR form within the statutory deadlines.

4.5 Given the antiquated and 'one-size-fits-all' nature of the AGAR form, there is a risk that members of the public would be confused about what the information contains refers to, especially with regards to the Accounting Statement on page 5. Unfortunately no additional commentary or explanation can be added to the form itself, although Officers have produced an explanatory note and training for Councillors.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- **where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or**
- **where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:**
  - **are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or**
  - **have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)**

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices.*

2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
   - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
   - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
   - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.

3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025.**

4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025.** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
   - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
   - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
   - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
   - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
   - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements **(Section 2, page 5)**. An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2025.**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including **the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights**, been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at **31 March 2025** been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? **NB:** do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

******Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices***, can be downloaded from **www.nalc.gov.uk** or from **www.ada.org.uk**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

WWW.HATFIELD-HERTS.GOV.UK AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. **If** the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✓		

O. **(For local councils only)** Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
	✓		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

23/05/2025 DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

s manwaring ME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 29/05/2025

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

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 2025, 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.*

Yes	No	N/A	
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.	✓			*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:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	1,054,382	929,516	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,040,284	1,183,220	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	612,056	606,545	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	940,701	1,053,098	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	836,505	1,392,389	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	929,516	273,794	*Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).*

8. Total value of cash and short term investments	741,347	332,465	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March –* ***To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	5,235,114	5,305,797	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			*The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.*
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			*The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit,** it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/ .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature SIGNATURE REQUIRED Date DD/MM/YYYY

Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25 explanations

	2023/24	2024/25	
1. Balances brought forward	1,054,382	929,516	
,2. (+) Precept or rates and Levies	1,040,284	1,183,220	Precept raised by £10.90 per month per Band D property
3. (+) Total Other receipts	612,056	606,545	Decrease in income of 0.9% **(See note 1**)
4. (-) Staff Costs	940,701	1,053,098	Staff costs increase of 11% on last year (11.5% the previous year) **(See Note 2)**
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	Nil	Nil	
6. (-) All other payments	836,505	1,392,389	Increase in payments of £555,884 (66%) **(See note 3)**
7. (=) Balances carried forward	929,516	273,794	
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	877,865	332,465	
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	5,235,114	5,305,797	Fixed Assets increased by 1.5% **(See note 4)**
10. Total borrowings	Nil	Nil	

Note 1

- I believe the income has decreased slightly due to Birchwood Leisure Centre being closed for the month of June 2024 for the toilet refurbishment.

Note 2

- 2024/2025 salaries budget was £790,000 and final cost was £1,053,098 (33% increase on budget and a 11% increase on 2023/2024 actual). This is due to more use of casual staff (to service increased evening and weekend bookings) and a higher than expected Local Government pay increase (flat salary increase rate of £1,290 per full time equivalent (FTE) salary banding plus minimum wage increases).

Note 3

- The increase in expenditure partly reflects an increase in operational costs due to the cost of living increases (fuel, utilities, consumables) plus the following projects
    - Millwards Play Area refurbishment - £60,000
    - Birchwood Toilet Refurbishment - £90,000
    - Lasertag investment - £30,000

Note 4

AGAR BOX 9

LAST YEARS FIGURE 2023.24	**£5,235,114.20**
MILLWARDS PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT	£58,000.00
LASERTAG EQUIPMENT	£29,840.00
L.F.R. - Floor - OXLEASE	-£2310.00
Boxer Carpentry - Fascia & soffits - OXLEASE	-£4285.00
GL Jones Spacewhirl - MILLWARDS	-£10,562.00
BOX 9 FIGURE 2024.25	**£5,305,797.20**

HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025

Internal Auditor: S MANWARING

Date of Audit Conclusion: 23rd May 2025

Checks Undertaken: April 2024 to March 2025

Activity	Checked	Comment/Report to Council
Will the Council formally approve the end of year accounts at the Annual Meeting? Agenda Item checked.		**It will be on the agenda for the June 18th Full Council meeting having been reviewed by the 11th June Finance & Compliance meeting.**
Do those accounts accord with the information given in Section 1 of the Annual Return?		**I have received excellent communication and help from both the RFO and the finance assistant. I have carried out a thorough check throughout the year on all ledgers and a clean & transparent set of accounts are available to easily scrutinise.**
Will the Council give members of the public the opportunity to inspect and raise questions on the accounts? Evidence of notice to be provided?		**As in previous years the notice will be published. Last years notice was displayed correctly in accordance with guidelines.**
Did the Council correctly provide for the period for the exercise of public rights for the previous year 2023-24. Evidence of notice provided?		**Yes they did and it can be seen on the council website.**
Has Council responded positively to issues that were raised in the previous internal audit report?		**There were no issues raised by myself but the external auditors raised that Section 1, Assertion 3 was incorrectly stated as Council did not re adopt GPC. This was carried out on 6th November 2024, minute number 46.**
Has Council been advised of the need to approve the Annual Return by the specified date		**Yes they have, in 2023 a new set of councillors were appraised of their duty regarding the AGAR by way of the Town Clerks training package. Any new Cllrs receive the same information.**
Are significant variances in the Annual Return (section 1) figures explained?		**The RFO has provided adequate explanation and has shown that she has a very good understanding of the councils finances.**
Does Council have an adequate website that complies with Governance & transparency?		**This council has a very good and comprehensive website.**
Have financial and other risk assessments been undertaken? Date and minutes checked?		**Yes. 5th March 2025.**
Has Council undertaken a review of its insurance cover including taking cognisance of advice from its insurers? Date and minutes checked.		**Yes. 10th January 2024.**
Has Council adopted financial regulations and a standing order to manage contracts for goods and services?		**Yes. 12th Oct 2024**

Is there a Council Minute recording the precept decision? Date and Minute number checked?		**Yes. 15th January 2024. Minute 58**
Does the precept requirement result from an adequate budget?		**The precept setting process began in early September 2023, the budget was then set from input from Cllrs & the Town Clerks reports & budget papers.**
Was progress against budget regularly monitored? Were the reserves adequate?		**The reserves are more than adequate. As before budget monitoring is going to be more robust this year as the officers felt they could improve their reporting to members so that they have a better picture of the finances.**
Is income and expenditure properly recorded and linked to approvals? Spot checks carried out?		**Spot checks carried out over a range of values. All processes are complete and linked to budget lines. Members do need updating on a more regular basis, RFO took this on board.**
Has a separate record of VAT been kept in the accounts?		**Yes it has.**
Has a separate record for Section 106 payments been maintained?		**This is recorded on an excel spreadsheet and all is in order.**
Were periodic bank reconciliations properly carried out during the year?		**Monthly bank recs are carried out on Sage.**
Have petty cash transactions been recorded and reconciled?		**N/A. The council does not operate a petty cash system.**
Have salaries to employees & allowances to members been paid in accordance with correct legislation? Have tax and National Insurance requirements been properly applied?		**Timesheets are collated and submitted to a payroll company as payroll is outsourced and then journals entered onto the Sage system.** **All appears to be correct and all payments are made to HMRC & LGPS by the RFO in a timely manner.**
Any miscellaneous observations?		**I note that one Councillor made a challenge to the external auditor regarding the conduct of the RFO & Town Clerk which was considered and dismissed by them. This cost the taxpayer in the region of £2000.** **I was dismayed to learn that allegations of financial misconduct have been made against the RFO by one Councillor**
Have pension contributions been properly calculated and collected?		**I have checked the LGPS records and all pension contributions have been correctly accounted for. The monthly submissions are being completed on time to ensure that the employee annual statements will be issued.**
Have you been provided with access to all documents requested?		**As in previous years, I have been given access to Sage which has all documents scanned and uploaded. I have also received any paper copies I have requested in a timely fashion, the website has been helpful.**

Were terms of appointment as Internal Auditor made clear on appointment?		**Yes they were. Unfortunately, I see that more personal attacks on staff have happened yet again this year. Exceptionally unprofessional and not what the citizens of Hatfield deserve.**
Were adequate explanations provided for any query or request for extra information?		**The help I received from the RFO was excellent. I am not unduly concerned with any explanation that I received and all information & documents were forwarded as soon as requested. Customer debt is the best that I have seen here, the ledger is very clean & transparent.**
Did you liaise with the Clerk/RFO before your final reportt?		**I liaised with the RFO before my final zoom call. I carry out checks throughout the financial year.**
Were areas and activities for checking agreed before your visit?		**I discussed this with the RFO and arranged my remote login times to Sage.**
Were you informed of any legislative changes which might affect your audit inspection?		**Yes and none were applicable.**

I confirm that in acting as Internal Auditor to Hatfield Town Council, I am wholly independent of the Council. I have carried out the above checks and been satisfied of the Council's position prior to completion of the Annual Return of Hatfield Town Council.

Signed: ..... **Dated: 29th May 2025**

FIXED ASSETS REGISTER - 2024/2025

BUILDINGS	Building improvements	Date Acquired	Location	2023/24 Value £	2024/25 Additions	2024/25 Deductions	2024/25 Value £
BIRCHWOOD CENTRE:	Balance b/fwd	2008/09	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,141,500.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,141,500.00
BC1	Leary Bros - Heating in Sportsman	2009/10	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 7,914.00	£ -	£ -	£ 7,914.00
BC3	Doe Sport - MUGA resurfacing	2010/11	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 26,744.00	£ -	£ -	£ 26,744.00
BC4	Fencing	2011/12	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 9,255.79	£ -	£ -	£ 9,255.79
BC5	Barrie Beard - Sports Hall Lighting	2011/12	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 16,870.00	£ -	£ -	£ 16,870.00
BC6	M. Axford - Changing Room Upgrade	2011/12	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 7,355.90	£ -	£ -	£ 7,355.90
BC7	GR8 Construction Changing Rooms	2011/12	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 7,365.00	£ -	£ -	£ 7,365.00
BC8	Fordhams - Heating System Upgrade	2011/12	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 8,865.00	£ -	£ -	£ 8,865.00
BC9	Activity World - FunZone Refurbishment	2011/12	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 23,200.00	£ -	£ -	£ 23,200.00
BC10	Solar Panels	2012/13	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 43,130.10	£ -	£ -	£ 43,130.10
BC11	L.F.R. - Sports Hall Floor Upgrade	2012/13	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 53,176.00	£ -	£ -	£ 53,176.00
BC12	Clayton Playframes - FunZone Refurbishment	2012/13	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 18,560.00	£ -	£ -	£ 18,560.00
BC13	Automatic Doors	2013/14	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 10,835.00	£ -	£ -	£ 10,835.00
BC14	Craftsman Lockers Ltd - Lockers & benches	2014/15	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 8,498.00	£ -	£ -	£ 8,498.00
BC15	Leary Bros - New Changing Rooms	2014/15	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 65,982.00	£ -	£ -	£ 65,982.00
BC16	Newgate Ltd - Car Park Barrier	2014/15	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 5,693.00	£ -	£ -	£ 5,693.00
BC18	ACC - FunZone air conditioning	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 18,592.00	£ -	£ -	£ 18,592.00
BC19	ACC - Sports Hall ventilation	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 3,872.00	£ -	£ -	£ 3,872.00
BC20	Emergency Lights upgrade	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 6,275.00	£ -	£ -	£ 6,275.00
BC21	Bonkersplay - F/Z perspex decks	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,842.50	£ -	£ -	£ 1,842.50
BC22	Green & White - Floorcleaner	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,266.67	£ -	£ -	£ 1,266.67
BC23	Community Heartbeat Trust - defib	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 950.00	£ -	£ -	£ 950.00
BC24	Tonic Fusion - F/Z website	2015/16	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,420.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,420.00
BC25	Beeches Gym - recumbent cycle	2016/17	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,674.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,674.00
BC26	Market stalls	2016/17	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 2,396.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,396.00
BC28	Safescan TA8010	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 299.00	£ -	£ -	£ 299.00
BC29	Signs	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 280.00	£ -	£ -	£ 280.00
BC30	Reception Shutter	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,160.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,160.00
BC31	Café fridge	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 915.84	£ -	£ -	£ 915.84
BC32	Stainless steel pastry display	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 2,489.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,489.00
BC33	Amp & Subwoofer	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 350.00	£ -	£ -	£ 350.00
BC34	Birchwood / FunZone CCTV	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 2,851.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,851.00
BC35	PCs & laptops	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 3,774.85	£ -	£ -	£ 3,774.85
BC36	FunZone crawl tube	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 4,443.00	£ -	£ -	£ 4,443.00
BC37	Café	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 7,800.00	£ -	£ -	£ 7,800.00
BC38	Café Tables & chairs	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 2,426.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,426.00
BC39	Pilates reformer	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,519.99	£ -	£ -	£ 1,519.99
BC40	Café altro	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 455.00	£ -	£ -	£ 455.00
BC41	Coffee shop shutter	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,450.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,450.00
BC42	Coffee shop lighting	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 1,550.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,550.00
BC43	F/Z lighting	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 987.00	£ -	£ -	£ 987.00
BC44	Water heater B'Wood	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 519.70	£ -	£ -	£ 519.70
BC45	Water heater Café	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 547.95	£ -	£ -	£ 547.95
BC46	Barista Coffee machine	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 4,129.00	£ -	£ -	£ 4,129.00
BC47	Café signs	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 593.00	£ -	£ -	£ 593.00
BC48	Desk	2017/18	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 165.00	£ -	£ -	£ 165.00
BC49	Husky icecream Fridge	2018/19	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 295.00	£ -	£ -	£ 295.00
BC50	Hammer Strength Hip & Glute	2018/19	Beeches Gym	£ 1,541.67	£ -	£ -	£ 1,541.67
BC51	Stratrac Treadmill	2018/19	Beeches Gym	£ 2,095.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,095.00
BC52	Laptop (bar supervisor & poppy appeal)	2018/19	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 998.00	£ -	£ -	£ 998.00
BC53	Leo McDowell Artwork	2019/20	Head Office	£ 1,600.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,600.00
BC54	Emergency lighting etc	2019/20	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£ 2,286.81	£ -	£ -	£ 2,286.81
BC55	Replacement skylights	2019/20	FunZone	£ 1,700.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,700.00
BC56	Red slide (Funtasia Design)	2019/20	FunZone	£ 10,890.00	£ -	£ -	£ 10,890.00

BC57	Pilates reformer	2019/20	Pilates	£	2,117.70	£	-	£	-	£ 2,117.70
BC58	Boiler shut off system	2019/20	Plant room	£	5,850.00	£	-	£	-	£ 5,850.00
BC59	shower floor	2019/20	changing rooms	£	950.00	£	-	£	-	£ 950.00
BC60	gym floor	2019/20	gym	£	3,226.99	£	-	£	-	£ 3,226.99
BC61	TC Laptop	2021/22	Head Office	£	535.91	£	-	£	-	£ 535.91
BC62	Funzone slides & tubes	2022/23	Funzone	£	25,980.00	£	-			£ 25,980.00
BC63	INDOOR GYM EQUIPMENT	2022/23	STRENGTH BOUTIQUE	£	30,340.54	£	-			£ 30,340.54
BC64	BIRCHWOOD BOILERS	2022/23	Longmead, AL10 0AN	£	17,815.00	£	-	£	-	£ 17,815.00
BC65	LASERTAG EQUIPMENT	2024/25	Funzone	£	-	£	29,840.00	£	-	£ 29,840.00
				£	**1,640,159.91**	**£**	**29,840.00**	**£**	**-**	**£ 1,669,999.91**
LEMSFORD HALL:	Balance b/fwd	2008/09	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	63,595.00	£	-	£	-	£ 63,595.00
LH1	L.F.R. - new floor	2010/11	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	12,403.00	£	-	£	-	£ 12,403.00
LH2	Leary Bros - Refurb roof	2010/11	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	21,082.00	£	-	£	-	£ 21,082.00
LH3	Herts Cooling Ltd - Cellar Cooling	2015/16	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	2,175.00	£	-	£	-	£ 2,175.00
LH4	Steroplast Healthcare Ltd - Defibrillator & Cabinet	2016/17	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	1,666.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,666.00
LH5	Safescan TA8010	2017/18	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	379.00	£	-	£	-	£ 379.00
LH6	Icecuber	2017/18	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	592.00	£	-	£	-	£ 592.00
LH7	Floor tiles	2018/19	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	821.40	£	-	£	-	£ 821.40
LH8	Cone climber & mulch	2018/19	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	7,781.00	£	-	£	-	£ 7,781.00
LH9	Replacement window shutter (cream)	2019/20	Brocket Road, AL8 7TT	£	750.00	£	-	£	-	£ 750.00
				£	**111,244.40**	**£**	**-**	**£**	**-**	**£ 111,244.40**
NEWGATE STREET VILLAGE HALL:	Balance b/fwd	2008/09	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	39,207.00	£	-	£	-	£ 39,207.00
NG1	Leary Bros - Kitchen Refurb.	2010/11	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	21,249.00	£	-	£	-	£ 21,249.00
NG2	Playdale - Play frame & safety surface	2010/11	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	3,212.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,212.00
NG3	Notice Board - Signmaker	2017/18	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	902.00	£	-	£	-	£ 902.00
NG4	Tennis court (Sports Courts deposit)	2017/18	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	7,207.00	£	-	£	-	£ 7,207.00
NG5	Windows	2017/18	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	10,700.00	£	-	£	-	£ 10,700.00
NG6	Tennis court	2017/18	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	19,620.25	£	-	£	-	£ 19,620.25
NG7	Lighting	2017/18	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	734.50	£	-	£	-	£ 734.50
NG8	New lighting	2019/20	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	942.25	£	-	£	-	£ 942.25
NG9	Outdoor gym equipment	2019/20	Newgate Street, SG13 8RP	£	5,000.00	£	-	£	-	£ 5,000.00
				£	**108,774.00**	**£**	**-**	**£**	**-**	**£ 108,774.00**
ROE HILL HALL:	Balance b/fwd	2008/09	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	188,537.00	£	-	£	-	£ 188,537.00
RH1	L.F.R. - Floor replacement	2009/10	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	16,751.50	£	-	£	-	£ 16,751.50
RH2	Michael T Axford	2010/11	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	7,376.10	£	-	£	-	£ 7,376.10
RH3	Doe Sport - MUGA	2014/15	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	25,000.00	£	-	£	-	£ 25,000.00
RH4	Doe Sport - MUGA	2015/16	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	40,458.00	£	-	£	-	£ 40,458.00
RH5	Gilks Fencing - Gate	2015/16	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	1,238.90	£	-	£	-	£ 1,238.90
RH6	Wetpour	2015/16	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	2,451.00	£	-	£	-	£ 2,451.00
RH7	Defibrillator & Cabinet - Steroplast Healthcare	2016/17	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	1,666.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,666.00
RH8	Husky icecream Fridge	2018/19	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	295.00	£	-	£	-	£ 295.00
RH9	Floor tiles	2018/19	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	2,409.44	£	-	£	-	£ 2,409.44
RH10	Tables	2018/19	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	545.94	£	-	£	-	£ 545.94
RH11	Tables	2018/19	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	1,839.50	£	-	£	-	£ 1,839.50
RH12	CCTV	2018/19	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	2,785.00	£	-	£	-	£ 2,785.00
RH13	Replacement Roller Shutter	2019/20	Briars Lane, AL10 8EY	£	3,030.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,030.00
				£	**294,383.38**	**£**	**-**	**£**	**-**	**£ 294,383.38**
OXLEASE										
OX1	L.F.R. - Floor	2011/12	Travellers Lane, AL10 8TJ	£	2,310.00	£	-	£	2,310.00	
OX2	Boxer Carpentry - Fascia & soffits	2019/20	Travellers Lane, AL10 8TJ	£	4,285.00	£	-	£	4,285.00	
				£	**6,595.00**	**£**	**-**	**£**	**6,595.00**	**£ -**
DEPOT										
	Goalposts	2017/18	Depot	£	739.83	£	-	£	-	£ 739.83

	Goalposts	2018/19	Depot	£ 695.00	£ -	£ -	£	695.00
	GFH Communications	2019/20	Depot Security	£ 2,898.00	£ -	£ -	£	2,898.00
	Gilks Fencing	2019/20	Depot fencing	£ 11,655.82	£ -	£ -	£	11,655.82
	The Catering Trailers	2019/20	Depot	£ 5,660.00	£ -	£ -	£	5,660.00
	Glasdon bins	2019/20	Depot for parks	£ 1,066.80	£ -	£ -	£	1,066.80
				£ 22,715.45	**£ -**	**£ -**	**£**	**22,715.45**
WAR MEMORIAL								
	There but not There Tommy	2018/19	War Memorial	**£ 776.00**	**£ -**	£ -	**£**	**776.00**
TOTAL BUILDINGS:				**£ 2,184,648.14**	**£ 29,840.00**	**£ 6,595.00**	**£**	**2,207,893.14**

LAND & COMMUNITY ASSETS	**Area:**	**Date Acquired**	**Location**	**Value £ 2022/23**	**Additions**	**Deductions**	**Value £ 2023/24**
Birchwood	23.029 Acres			£ 1,656,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,656,000.00
War Memorial	22 Poles	1921		£ 100.00	£ -	£ -	£ 100.00
St. Albans Rd East Rec Ground	2.95 Acres	1932		£ 450.00	£ -	£ -	£ 450.00
Land at Lemsford		1932		£ 102,905.00	£ -	£ -	£ 102,905.00
Land at Newgate Street	5 Acres	1935		£ 108,493.00	£ -	£ -	£ 108,493.00
Land at Roe Hill	11.146 Acres	1964		£ 312,463.00	£ -	£ -	£ 312,463.00
Land at Hazel Grove	0.58 Acres	1988		£ 3,250.00	£ -	£ -	£ 3,250.00
Land at Acacia St	2 Acres	1998		£ 10,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 10,000.00
Mulberry Mead	0.30 Acres	24/02/2004		£ 100.00	£ -	£ -	£ 100.00
War Memorial	Grade II Listed 2019	2015/16	Renovation - new column	£ 5,467.00	£ -	£ -	£ 5,467.00
Land at Coronation Gardens		2008		£ 100.00	£ -	£ -	£ 100.00
Land at de Havilland Grange		2008		£ 1.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1.00
War memorial lighting		2017/18		£ 808.26	£ -	£ -	£ 808.26
Land at Oldings Corner		2019/20		£ 5,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 5,000.00
Princes Gate Play Area & Land	From Persimmons Homes Title No HD588878	2019/20		£ 1.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1.00
Chipmunk Chase etc	Play Areas & Open Spaces from Bovis	Jan-21		£ 1.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1.00
TOTAL				**£ 2,205,139.26**	**£ -**	**£ -**	**£ 2,205,139.26**

VEHICLES	**Registration**	**Date Acquired**	**Location**	**Value £ 2022/23**	**Additions**	**Deductions**	**Value £ 2023/24**	
KUBOTA TRACTOR	KL52 DBO	2002	KUBOTATRAC036	£ 1,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,000.00	Nominal value
Truck Ford	HS21BPK	23/01/2024	87	£ 26,750.00			£ 26,750.00	
Truck Ford	WN21DXV	23/01/2024	88	£ 26,999.00			£ 26,999.00	
Van Ford	LJ18PUH	01/03/2018	FORD044	£ 14,128.00	£ -	£ -	£ 14,128.00	
Toro Mowing Machine	LK64FUV	Apr-18	TORO034	£ 18,500.00	£ -	£ -	£ 18,500.00	
TRACTOR MOWER	KX68BEO	Mar-19	KUBOTATRAC039 / TRI053	£ 47,700.00	£ -	£ -	£ 47,700.00	
Kubota MOWER	Not registered for road	Mar-19	KUBOTADECK035	£ 5,750.00	£ -	£ -	£ 5,750.00	
Ford Van	LB70 ZHN	Jan-21	Depot	£ 17,250.23	£ -	£ -	£ 17,250.23	
Iseki Rotary Rideon	EF22UPD	Aug-22	Depot	£ 23,250.00	£ -		£ 23,250.00	
Iseki Flail Rideon	EF22UPE	Aug-22	Depot	£ 23,250.00	£ -		£ 23,250.00	
TOTAL				**£ 204,577.23**	**£ -**	**£ -**	**£ 204,577.23**	

PLANT & MACHINERY		**Date Acquired**	**Location**	**Value £ 2022/23**	**Additions**	**Deductions**	**Value £ 2023/24**
Cricket Mower		2001	Depot	£ 4,279.00	£ -	£ -	£ 4,279.00
Spike Splitter		2002	Depot	£ 2,620.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,620.00
Woodchipper	Browns	2015	CHIPP046	£ 6,700.00	£ -	£ -	£ 6,700.00
Stihl Kombi units & attachments		Jan-24	Depot	£ 9,847.00			£ 9,847.00
Icemaster	Glasdon	2017/18	Depot	£ 120.00	£ -	£ -	£ 120.00
Goal posts	JP Lennard	2017/18	Depot	£ 266.00	£ -	£ -	£ 266.00
GT Trailer	Browns	2017/18	Depot	£ 2,600.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,600.00
Container cricket mower	TRI Agri	2019/20		£ 1,900.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,900.00
Replacement stephill generator	Browns	2019/20	GEN045	£ 2,889.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,889.00

Containers/office/new depot	TRI Agri	2019/20	Depot	£	21,059.00	£	-	£	-	£ 21,059.00
Water Bowser	Ernest Doe	Mar-23	Depot	£	5,415.00	£	-	£	-	£ 5,415.00
Hayter Handmower	Mowers Online	Mar-23	Depot	£	1,271.96	£	-	£	-	£ 1,271.96
Spreader	Rigby Taylor	2020/21	Depot	£	555.00	£	-	£	-	£ 555.00
TOTAL				**£**	**59,521.96**	**£**	**-**	**£**	**-**	**£ 59,521.96**
GARDENS & PLAY AREAS										
PA1	Playtop - wetpour	2008/09	Roe Hill	£	23,026.00	£	-	£	-	£ 23,026.00
PA2	Playtop - wetpour	2008/09	St Albans Rd East	£	17,356.00	£	-	£	-	£ 17,356.00
PA3	Centenary Park Gates	2008/09	Centenary Park	£	3,599.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,599.00
PA4	Wicksteed - Yo-Yo swing	2008/09	Roe Hill	£	4,874.00	£	-	£	-	£ 4,874.00
PA5	Wicksteed - Spiro whirl	2009/09	Roe Hill	£	3,005.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,005.00
PA6	Wicksteed - Flying saucer	2008/09	St Albans Road East	£	1,970.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,970.00
PA7	Wicksteed - Spiro whirl	2008/09	St Albans Road East	£	3,005.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,005.00
PA8	RTC - Wetpour	2009/10	Millwards & Ellenbrook	£	17,987.00	£	-	£	-	£ 17,987.00
PA9	GL Jones Spacewhirl	2009/10	Millwards	£	10,562.00	£	-	£	10,562.00	
PA10	GL Jones Swing	2009/10	Ellenbrook	£	4,033.70	£	-	£	-	£ 4,033.70
PA11	GL Jones Whirling Platform	2009/10	Ellenbrook	£	6,587.00	£	-	£	-	£ 6,587.00
P11a	Millwards Play area refurbishment	2024/25	Millwards			£	58,000.00			£ 58,000.00
PA12	Playdale - City Spinner	2010/11	Lemsford	£	1,749.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,749.00
PA13	Whirling Platform & wetpour	2010/11	Newstead	£	6,478.78	£	-	£	-	£ 6,478.78
PA14	Playdale - Rota Bounce	2010/11	Acacia Street	£	5,200.00	£	-	£	-	£ 5,200.00
PA15	Caloo - Outdoor gym	2011/12	Centenary Park	£	4,300.00	£	-	£	-	£ 4,300.00
PA16	Playdale - Play Area Upgrades	2012/13	Newgate Street	£	10,404.00	£	-	£	-	£ 10,404.00
PA17	Playgrounds UK - safety surface	2012/13	Newgate Street	£	3,675.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,675.00
PA18	Playgrounds UK - safety surface	2012/13	Acacia Street	£	2,170.00	£	-	£	-	£ 2,170.00
PA19	GL Jones - Swings	2013/14	Roe Hill & Acacia Street	£	10,766.87	£	-	£	-	£ 10,766.87
PA20	Playdale - Ariel runway & swings	2014/15	St Albans Road East	£	18,647.00	£	-	£	-	£ 18,647.00
PA21	Ronnie Fenwick - Wooden Toadstools	2015/16	St Albans Road East	£	1,650.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,650.00
PA22	Wetpour	2010/11	Newstead	£	14,133.00	£	-	£	-	£ 14,133.00
PA23	Wetpour	2010/11	Coppice Close	£	9,712.00	£	-	£	-	£ 9,712.00
PA24	Replacement springers (HAGS)	2017/18	Various play areas	£	3,259.00	£	-	£	-	£ 3,259.00
PA25	Kissing gates (DDA compliant) - Gilks	2015/16	Centenary Park	£	3,451.50	£	-	£	-	£ 3,451.50
PA26	Bins - broxap	2017/18	Various play areas	£	1,185.75	£	-	£	-	£ 1,185.75
PA27	Benches & bin	2018/19	Various areas	£	4,738.00	£	-	£	-	£ 4,738.00
PA28	Flight of Fantasy Train	2019/20	Ellenbrook	£	25,738.00	£	-	£	-	£ 25,738.00
PA29	GL Jones Abilty swing & 2 flat swings	2019/20	Ellenbrook	£	12,720.00	£	-	£	-	£ 12,720.00
PA30	Multiplay	2019/20	St Albans Rd East	£	12,980.00	£	-	£	-	£ 12,980.00
PA31	Rowing machine	2019/20	Centenary Park	£	1,245.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,245.00
PA32	Picnic Tables & benches	2019/20	Ellenbrook	£	2,772.00	£	-	£	-	£ 2,772.00
PA33	LA Metalworks - gate	2019/20	Ellenbrook	£	2,100.00	£	-	£	-	£ 2,100.00
PA34a	Upgrade to play area (SLC Landscape)	2019/20	Ellenbrook	£	81,411.00	£	-	£	-	£ 81,411.00
PA34b	Upgrade to play area (SLC Landscape)	2019/20	Acacia Street	£	76,881.08	£	-	£	-	£ 76,881.08
PA36	Benches - Acacia St	2020/21	Acacia Street	£	5,348.50	£	-	£	-	£ 5,348.50
PA37	Benches - Ellenbrook	2020/21	Ellenbrook	£	1,820.50	£	-	£	-	£ 1,820.50
PA38	Upgrade to play area (SLC Landscape)	2020/21	Ellenbrook	£	5,042.98	£	-	£	-	£ 5,042.98
PA39	Dog Bin (Glasdon)	2020/21	Poppy Walk	£	216.90	£	-	£	-	£ 216.90
PA40	2 x Bin (Glasdon)	2020/21	de Hav Grange	£	947.30	£	-	£	-	£ 947.30
PA41	6 x Bin (Glasdon)	2021/22	Roe Hil	£	1,674.00	£	-	£	-	£ 1,674.00
PA42	Upgrade to Play Area (Caloo)	2021/22	Roe Hill	£	34,516.00	£	-	£	-	£ 34,516.00
PA43	10 x Gym Equipment	2022/23	Roe Hill	£	31,340.00	£	-			£ 31,340.00
PA44	10 x Gym Equipment	2022/23	St Albans Rd East	£	20,164.75	£	-			£ 20,164.75
TOTAL				**£**	**514,442.61**	**£**	**58,000.00**	**£**	**10,562.00**	**£ 561,880.61**
OVERALL TOTAL				**£**	**5,168,329.20**	**£**	**87,840.00**	**£**	**17,157.00**	**£ 5,239,012.20**
			adjustment 2017/18	£	66,785.00					£ 66,785.00
				£	**5,235,114.20**					**£ 5,305,797.20**

AGAR BOX 9

1200	LAST YEARS FIGURE		**£5,235,114.20**
ADD			
ADD	Millwards Play Area Refurbishment		£58,000.00
ADD	Lasertag Equipement		£29,840.00
ADD			
ADD			
ADD			
DEDUCT	L.F.R. - Floor - OXLEASE	-£	2,310.00
DEDUCT	Boxer Carpentry - Fascia & soffits - OXLEASE	-£	4,285.00
DEDUCT	GL Jones Spacewhirl - MILWARDS	-£	10,562.00
DEDUCT			
DEDUCT			
DEDUCT			
DEDUCT			
	BOX 9 FIGURE		**£5,305,797.20**

CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review and should not be published on your website

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation

Name of smaller authority: **HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): **HERTFORDSHIRE**

On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:

Commencing on **20TH JUNE 2025**

and ending on **31ST JULY 2025**

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2025 (i.e. Tuesday 1 July – Monday 14 July). The period should not commence before the approval of the AGAR.

We have suggested the following dates: Tuesday 3 June – Monday 14 July 2025 The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Tuesday 1 July – Monday 11 August 2025.)

Signed: _____

Role: RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

CLASSIFICATION:	PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION:	FULL COUNCIL
DATE OF MEETING	**Wednesday 11 June 2025**
AUTHOR	Jonah Anthony, Town Clerk

HR Review

1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report sets out the measures Hatfield Town Council tale to comply with its employment and HR obligations.

2 Recommendation

That the Council **NOTE** the report

3 Background and Explanation

Employment powers and obligations

3.1 Parish and Town Council have powers under section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 172) to "appoint such officers as they think necessary for the proper discharge by the authority of such of their or another authority's functions as fall to be discharged by them". In recruiting, appointing, managing (and if necessary) parting ways with) employees, the Town Council needs to ensure it complies with laws governing parish and town councils, laws governing public sector bodies, laws governing any employer/employee relationship and health & safety regulations in the workplace.

HR Support

3.2 To assist Parish and Town Councils in using this power, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), have produced The Good Councillor's Guide to Employment (Annex A). This support is then supplemented by advice services, and more local support provided by the regional association (Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils – HAPTC).

3.3 However given the size of Hatfield Town Council, and the increasing complexity of employment law. the Council has employed the services of HR consultants to provide generic and bespoke advice for a number of years. Currently the Town Council use the

services of Council HR and Governance Support (and has done so since 2021). In 2022 the former Council's Establishment Sub Committee agreed to enter into a 5 year subscription which ends in September 2027.

3.4 As part of the subscription service the Town Council receives the following:

- Standard contract templates
- Staff Handbook
- HR policies (e.g. loan working, equal opportunities
- Regular email updates on the latest HR and governance developments impacting
- Unlimited advice on all employment law issues (such as performance management, maternity, TUPE, redundancy, disciplinaries and grievances).
- Unlimited advice on parish and town council governance and procedural matters.

3.5 The Town Council is also able to access discounted optional additional services. These include

- Organisational review
- Visioning and developing a Strategic Plan
- Policy writing
- Recruitment
- Training Courses
- Investigations, hearings and appeals

4 Impacts

Legal

4.1 As well as the Local Government Act 1972 which provides the Town Council with the power to employ staff, the key employment legislations are as follows:

- The Employment Rights Act 1996 (which forms the basis of workers rights in the UK)
- The Working Time Regulations 1998 (which govern when people can work, rest periods and minimum holiday allocations)
- Maternity and Parental Leave etc Regulations 1999 (contains maternity and parental rights for those with children under the age of 18).
- The Equality Act 2010 (which legally protects people from discrimination in the recruitment process, and once they are in the workplace)
- The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (which makes it a criminal offence to employ a person who does not have permission to work in the UK)

4.2 Parliament is currently considering a new Employment Bill which seeks to strengthen worker rights and which is likely to require substantial changes to our current Staff Handbook and HR policies and procedures once it comes into force.

4.3 Other key legislation include the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which made clear that employers had a legal responsibility to make sure that they provided a safe working environment. This will include carrying out risk assessments, offering staff training, and providing adequate safety equipment. It also includes ensuring staff are not bullied, harassed or seriously mistreated.

Finance

4.4 The cost of the Council HR and Governance Support subscription is included in the annual budget. However additional tasks and requests are covered by the operational budget.

Risk

4.5 Given the size of the Town Council, the number of contracted and casual staff employed and the variety of jobs that are undertaken, having external HR support is considered the best way for the Council to comply with its obligation, rather than rely solely on trained individual staff members or by employing a dedicated HR professional. This is especially true, at those times when the Town Council is required to access good quality HR advice at short notice.

4.6 However more can, and should be done to equip both staff and councillors with a better understanding of key HR legislation, principles and best practice. This will help the Town Council utilise the tools made available to it through organisations such as NALC and HAPTC, and the specific resources and advice provided by Council HR and Governance Support. To this end, Officers are in the process of arranging HR specific training for Members of the Establishment Sub Committee, which would be made available to all Members permitted to take participate in such activities.