

# AGAR 2025/26

## Annual Governance Statements

### Name of Authority: Ashington Town Council

Web address: <https://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk>

**We acknowledge, as the members of the above 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 2026, that:**

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

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

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. Yes

We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. Yes

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. Yes

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

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

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. Yes

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. N/A

We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review. No

For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation follows on the next page.

### This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

On this date

As recorded in minute reference

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

Signed by Chair

Signed by Clerk

\*Published web address

## Annual Governance Statement - AGAR Form 2

### Explanation for any assertion to which the response was 'No'

**Name of authority: Ashington Town Council**

Web address: <https://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk>

(10) We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.

The Council is unable to answer Yes to Assertion 10 in respect of the year ending 31 March 2026 as full compliance with all elements of the assertion was not in place for the entirety of the financial year. However, the Council wishes to place on record the substantial progress made during 2025/26 and the firm foundations now in place for full compliance to be asserted in the 2026/27 return. The Council adopted its IT Policy in March 2026, based on the NALC model template and adapted to reflect the specific needs and working practices of Ashington Town Council. Whilst adoption fell within the 2025/26 financial year, the policy had not been in place for the full year and the Council considers it appropriate to reflect this honestly in its return. The Council has undertaken a substantial accessibility remediation programme during 2025/26, working towards compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA standard as required under Assertion 10 and the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. This programme included the review and remediation of 225 PDF and Office documents held within the website and document library. Remaining accessibility issues identified through accessibility testing relate primarily to historic archived content that falls outside the scope of the regulations by virtue of publication date exemptions. Notwithstanding this, where reasonably practicable the Council has undertaken improvements to legacy content as part of its wider accessibility improvement programme, going beyond the minimum requirements of the regulations. The Council is committed to achieving full compliance with all elements of Assertion 10 and anticipates being in a position to answer Yes with confidence in the 2026/27 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.