

Upton by Chester and District Parish Council's Response to the Annual Governance 'No' Assertions and Internal Auditor's Report – 2024-25

A number of issues arose during the period when the Council was without a permanent Clerk/RFO. An appointment of a new permanent Clerk/RFO was made in December 2024, by which time the Council had been without a Clerk for a significant period.

In the absence of a Clerk, Councillors undertook administrative responsibilities in order to maintain the day-to-day operation of the Council. While this ensured continuity, the extended period without professional clerking support inevitably had an adverse impact on governance and administrative arrangements, as identified in the Internal Auditor's findings.

The Council now has an experienced Clerk/RFO in post, appointed in December 2024. Since taking up the role is working through improvements throughout the Council's administrative and financial processes implementing measures to address the issues highlighted during the period without a permanent Clerk. This includes ensuring accurate record-keeping, strengthening governance procedures, and providing clear guidance to councillors on statutory responsibilities. These steps are intended to ensure the Council operates efficiently, transparently, and in full compliance with relevant regulations going forward.