# Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

## Accounting statement 2024-25 for:

**Name of body:** ST BRIDES MINOR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

| | Year ending | | Notes and guidance |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 31 March 2024 (£) | 31 March 2025 (£) | **Please round all figures to nearest £. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or nil balances. All figures must agree to the underlying financial records for the relevant year.** |
| **Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments** | | | |
| **1.** Balances brought forward | 66,952 | 37,596 | Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Must agree to line 7 of the previous year. |
| **2.** (+) Income from local taxation/levy | 61,957 | 67,200 | Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies. |
| **3.** (+) Total other receipts | 3,634 | 12,934 | Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants. |
| **4.** (-) Staff costs | 15,970 | 16,506 | Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, taxable allowances, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and termination costs. Exclude reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. |
| **5.** (-) Loan interest/capital repayments | 0 | 0 | Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any). |
| **6.** (-) Total other payments | 78,977 | 60,605 | Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5). |
| **7.** (=) Balances carried forward | 37,596 | 40,619 | Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6). |
| **Statement of balances0** | | | |
| **8.** (+) Debtors | 0 | 0 | **Income and expenditure accounts only:** Enter the value of debts owed to the body at the year-end. |
| **9.** (+) Total cash and investments | 37,596 | 40,619 | **All accounts:** The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cashbook balance as per the bank reconciliation. |
| **10.** (-) Creditors | 0 | 0 | **Income and expenditure accounts only:** Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year-end. |
| **11.** (=) Balances carried forward | 37,596 | 40,619 | **Total balances should equal line 7 above:** Enter the total of (8+9-10). |
| **12.** Total fixed assets and long-term assets | 59,804 | 74,078 | The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held as at 31 March. |
| **13.** Total borrowing | 0 | 0 | The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB). |

# Annual Governance Statement

We acknowledge as the members of the Council, our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including 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 the Council: | Toolkit |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No* | | |
| 1. In consultation with the community, we have developed a vision and purpose for the Council and used this vision to inform the Council's plans, budget and activities. | Yes | | Has consulted with the community and focussed its activities to meet the community's needs | A, C |
| 2. We have adopted a Code of Conduct for members and officers and implemented an appropriate training plan for members to ensure all councillors understand their role and responsibilities. | Yes | | Ensures that councillors understand and are equipped to deliver their roles and responsibilities. | B |
| 3. We have ensured that we electronically publish the information the Council is required to publish by law, on its website at [St Brides Minor Community Council] | Yes | | Is transparent about its activities and provides the public with all information required by law | A, C, D, E |
| 4. We have taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the Council complies with relevant laws and regulations when exercising its functions, including employment of staff and payment of allowances to members. | Yes | | Has only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it does so | |
| 5. We have adopted standing orders, financial regulations and terms of reference and ensure that these are followed when conducting business including functions delegated to committees. | Yes | | Has adopted rules and procedures to govern how the Council conducts its business including procurement of goods and services. | B, E |
| 6. We have put in place arrangements for:<br>• Effective financial management including the setting and monitoring of the Council's budget<br>• Maintenance and security of accurate and up to date accounting and other financial records<br>• Identifying potential liabilities, commitments, events and transactions that may have a financial impact on the Council. | Yes | | Calculated its budget requirement in accordance with the law and properly monitors its financial position throughout the year | D |
| 7. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control and management of risk, including:<br>• measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption including clearly documented procedures for authorising and making payments<br>• assessment and management of risks facing the Council<br>• an adequate and effective system of internal audit<br>and reviewed the effectiveness of these arrangements. | Yes | | Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge including arranging for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether these meet the needs of the body. | D, E |
| 8. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit. | Yes | | Considered and taken appropriate action to address weaknesses /issues brought to its attention by internal and external auditors. | D, E |
| 9. We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014. | Yes | | Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect the body's accounts as set out in the notice of audit issued by the Auditor General. | E |
| **10. General power of Competence** – The Council has resolved to adopt the General Power of Competence set out in Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 | No | | Meets the eligibility criteria to exercise the general Power of Competence | E |

* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

## Additional disclosure notes

Include here any additional disclosures the Council considers necessary to aid the reader's understanding of the accounting statement and/or the annual governance statement

| **The following information is provided to assist the reader to understand the accounting statement and/or the Annual Governance Statement** |
|---|
| **1. Expenditure under S137 Local Government Act 1972**<br>Section 137(1) of the 1972 Act permits the Council to spend on activities for which it has no other specific powers if the Council considers that the expenditure is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, the area or any part of it, or all or some of its inhabitants, providing that the benefit is commensurate with the expenditure. Section 137(3) also permits the Council to incur expenditure for certain charitable and other purposes. The maximum expenditure that can be incurred under both section 137(1) and (3) for the financial year 2024-25 was £10.81 per elector.<br>In 2024-25, the Council made payments totalling £0.00 under section 137. These payments are included within 'Other payments' in the Accounting Statement. |
| **2.** |

## Trust Funds

| | Yes | No | N/A | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Trust funds – The Council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust fund(s)/assets. We exclude transactions related to these trusts from the Accounting Statement. In our capacity as trustee, we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. | | | N/A | Has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts. |

## Council approval and certification

The Council is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements and the annual governance statement in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the Act) and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

| **Certification by the RFO** | **Approval by the Council** |
|---|---|
| I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Council, and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2025. | I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council under minute reference:<br>**Minute ref:** 38/25-26 |
| **RFO signature:** A. C. Harris | **Chair signature:** |
| **Name:** Ann C. Harris | **Name:** Shaun K Morgan |
| **Date:** 24th June 2025. | **Date:** 24-6-25 |

* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

Archwilio Cymru
Audit Wales

# Auditor General’s report and audit opinion

I certify that I have completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025 of **St Brides Minor Community Council**. My audit has been conducted on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales and in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and guidance issued by the Auditor General for Wales.

**Audit opinion: Unqualified**

On the basis of my audit, in my opinion no matters have come to my attention to give cause for concern that, in any material respect, the information reported in this Annual Return:

- has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices;
- that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met;
- is not consistent with the Council’s governance arrangements; and
- that the Council does not have proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

**Other matters and recommendations**

I draw the Council’s attention to the following matters and recommendations which do not affect my audit opinion but should be addressed by the Council.

**Internal audit recommendations**

We note the Internal Audit recommendations related to periodic bank reconciliations. The Council provided a year end reconciliation. However, it is good practice to reconcile the cashbook to the bank statements on a regular basis. Ideally this should be done whenever a bank statement is received. The reconciliation can then be reported to the Council to provide assurance on the completeness and accuracy of its financial records.

**Publication of information**

The Section 55 of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013 requires the Council, in so far as is reasonably practicable, to publish alongside its minutes, any documents which are referred to in the minutes. The Council does not publish documents and reports provided to members such as a list of payments for approval. We recommend that the Council reviews its publication arrangements to publish supplementary information.

**Major asset insurance**

Our review of the Council's insurance policy identified that several major assets are not insured at their full or appropriate value.

The Council should review its insurance arrangements to ensure that all key assets are appropriately covered and that the level of insurance is sufficient.

**Statement of Payments made to Members**

The Statement of Payments made to Members presents only total amounts, and no breakdown of allowances by individual member was provided. As a result, we were unable to confirm compliance with IRPW requirements.

The Council should prepare a full breakdown of allowances paid to each individual member, ensuring this information is both available for audit and published on their website.

**S137 Expenditure**

Our testing identified that the Council makes Section 137 expenditure. However, the Council has stated S137 expenditure on the annual return as £0.

We recommend that the Council reports S137 expenditure correctly.

**Staff Costs**

The bank statement shows that three staff-related payments totalling £1,335.61 recorded in 2024-25 were made on 28/03/24 and therefore relate to the 2023-24 financial year. This results in a non-material overstatement of staff costs in 2024-25 and a corresponding understatement in 2023-24.

We recommend that the Council strengthens its year-end processes to ensure staff costs are recorded in the correct financial period.

We also noted that the amount paid to the Clerk per the employee payment schedule does not agree with the net pay shown on the payslip. The unexplained discrepancy totals £409.14.

The Council should investigate and reconcile this difference, ensuring that payroll records, payslips and bank payments all align, and that any adjustments are fully documented and authorised.

**Supporting evidence**

One non-material payment was not supported by an invoice.

We recommend that the Council ensures all payments are backed by appropriate supporting documentation in order to maintain a complete audit trail.

There are no further matters I wish to draw to the Council's attention.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Richard Harries, Director, Audit Wales**<br>**For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales** | **Date: 05/05/2026** |

## Annual internal audit report to:

**Name of body:** ST BRIDES MINOR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, has included carrying out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ending 31 March 2025.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Council'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 the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the following control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

| | Agreed? | | | | Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No* | N/A | Not covered** | |
| 1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| 2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| 3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| 4. The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| 5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| 6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. | | | x | | Please see internal audit report |
| 7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with contracts/ minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| 8. Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate, and properly maintained. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |

* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers

| | Agreed? | | | | Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No* | N/A | Not covered** | |
| **9.** Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out. | | x | | | Please see internal audit report |
| **10.** Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments/income and expenditure), agreed with the cashbook, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded. | x | | | | Please see internal audit report |
| **11.** Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee. | | | x | | Please see internal audit report |

| For any risk areas identified by the Council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed: | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Agreed? | | | | Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body) |
| | Yes | No* | N/A | Not covered** | |
| **12.** | | | | | |
| **13.** | | | | | |
| **14.** | | | | | |

* 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).

** 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, internal audit must explain why not.

[My detailed findings and recommendations which I draw to the attention of the Council are included in my detailed report to the Council dated ______17.06.2025_______________.] * Delete if no report prepared.

## Internal audit confirmation

I/we confirm that as the Council's internal auditor, I/we have not been involved in a management or administrative role within the body (including preparation of the accounts) or as a member of the body during the financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26. I also confirm that there are no conflicts of interest surrounding my appointment.

| |
|---|
| **Name of person who carried out the internal audit:** KL Grabham |
| **Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:** KL Grabham |
| **Date:** 17.06.2025 |

* Please include an explanation for any 'No' answers