ASSERTION 10

OVERVIEW

Assertion 10 was added to proper practices for smaller authorities in 2025 to bring digital and data management to the fore in an ever-changing digital world. Proper practices can be found in the **Practitioners' Guide** and are mandatory for smaller authorities. Assertion 10 will appear in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the first time in 2025/26.

MEETING ASSERTION 10 REQUIREMENTS

To warrant a positive response to Assertion 10, the authority needs to have taken the following actions:

==Email management==

1.47 Email management — Every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain, for example *clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk* or ==*clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk*== rather than *abcparishclerk@gmail.com* or *abcparishclerk@outlook.com*.

Resources to support compliance:

- **Parish and town council email addresses**
- **Preparing to move to a gov.uk domain**
- **Parish Council Domains Helper Service - FAQs**

==Website accessibility==

1.48 — All smaller authorities (excluding parish meetings) must meet legal requirements for all existing websites regardless of what domain is being used.

1.49 — All websites must meet the ==**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA**== and the ==**Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018**== (where applicable).

Resources to support compliance:

- The Good Councillor's Guide to Website Accessibility (coming soon)

==Freedom of Information and transparency==

1.50 All websites must include published documentation as specified in the <mark>Freedom of Information Act 2000</mark> and the **Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities** (where applicable).

Parish, town and community councils are required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to adopt and maintain an approved publication scheme. Councils should adopt the ICO's <mark>Model Publication Scheme</mark> and make it available to the public. The ICO also provides guide-to-information templates tailored for parish, town and community councils, which complement, but don't replace the scheme. In practice, councils should have both.

Resources to support compliance:

- **Freedom of Information**
- **Model Publication Scheme**
- **Template guide to information – Parish and town councils (England)**
- **Template guide to information – Community and town councils (Wales)**
- **Canllaw templed i wybodaeth – Cynghorau Cymuned/Tref (Cymru)**
- **Transparency Code**

<mark>Data Protection and GDPR</mark>

1.51 All smaller authorities, including parish meetings, must follow both the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016** and the **Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018**.

1.52 All smaller authorities, including parish meetings, must process personal data with care and in line with the principles of data protection.

1.53 The **DPA 2018** supplements the **GDPR** and classifies an authority as both a Data Controller and a Data Processor.

Resources to support compliance:

- <mark>**Data Protection Roadmap**</mark>

<mark>IT Policy</mark>

1.54 All smaller authorities (excluding parish meetings) must also have an IT policy. This explains how everyone - clerks, members and other staff - should

conduct authority business in a secure and legal way when using IT equipment and software. This relates to the use of authority-owned and personal equipment.

Resources to support compliance:

- **IT Policy**