

## 11-03-26

Item 5.1

**ASSERTION 10** is a new criteria added to the Annual Governance Statement (AGAR) for 2026.

Parish councils **must be able to demonstrate and prove compliance** for audit requirements.

Assertion 10 confirms that your authority “uses digital systems and personal data responsibly, securely and in line with legal requirements”

### KEY REQUIREMENTS

- Email Management:** must have a generic email account hosted on a council owned domain e.g. [clerk@wickmere-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wickmere-pc.gov.uk)  
This matters for improved transparency and authentication; increased security; professional and trusted communication; better containment of data breaches; central government monitoring for vulnerabilities.
- Website Accessibility:** must comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines; Public Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018  
This means documents must be created from accessible Word doc formats and saved as PDF/A format both of which are readable for screen readers. Use a checking tool to ensure accessibility and include an ‘Accessibility Statement’ on the website with last checked date, known limitations and how users can request help.
- Freedom of Information and Transparency:** must publish documentation required by Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Transparency Code.  
FOI must have a publication scheme and schedule of charges on the website  
Transparency Requirements up to 25K; details of expenditure over £100; councillor names and roles; land and building assets; draft minutes within one month; agendas and meeting papers.
- Data Protection (GDPR & DPA 2018):** must handle personal data in line with 7 core principles and be able to prove compliance. Must regularly review data audits; have a Data Protection Policy; Train staff and councillors; Register with ICO Information Commissioners Office
- IT Policy:** new mandatory requirement all parish councils must have an IT Policy in place. Please read the emailed draft IT Policy.

