Theresa Goss
3 Tanners Close, Middleton Cheney
Banbury, OX17 2GD

Mike White
Chesterton Parish Council

28 April 2025

Dear Mike

Chesterton Parish Council - Internal Audit Report 2024/2025

Please find attached, the Internal Audit report for Chesterton Parish Council for 2024/2025.

This internal audit report is based upon the JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance) Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England 2024 publication.

The scope of this Internal Audit is focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls and was outlined in the original Letter of Engagement. Where any such controls are found to be deficient, the internal audit will help lead to improvement in those processes.

By applying the principles of internal auditing, outlined in the current Accounts and Audit Regulations and applying the approach to internal audit testing outlined above, every effort is made to ensure that all internal audits are conducted with due professional care, integrity and independence. All conclusions derived from the audit are based upon objective and traceable evidence.

Please note, the internal audit is not a detailed inspection of all records and transactions of the Council in order to detect error or fraud. It is the periodic independent review of a Council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the Council's control. Managing the Council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the staff and Councillors.

The attached recommendations are to help the Council improve its processes and in no way detract from the good work it, and the Clerk, complete on a daily basis.

This report should be submitted to the next meeting of the Parish Council to inform Councillors of the Internal Audit work carried out and agree how and when, the recommendations will be actioned.

I hope that this report is of help to the Parish Council. If you would like any further assistance or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Theresa Goss

Theresa Goss, Internal Auditor
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Chesterton Parish Council
Internal Audit 2024/2025
Final Report

Annual Return Section	Process	Findings	Recommendations and actions
A	Bookkeeping Arrangements	Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year and are well maintained with audit trails.	No further recommendations.
B	Council's Financial Regulations have been met with regard to expenditure	The Council's Financial Regulations have been met in that appropriate authorisations have been given for each level of expenditure. Payments were supported by invoices, and expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	No further recommendations.
C	Review of Internal Controls	The Council does have adequate provision.	All Councillors should have sight of invoices before payment is made.
C	Review of Risk Assessment	During 2024/2025, the Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives using their Risk Assessment.	No further recommendations.
D	Budgetary Controls (Precept requirement)	The annual Precept requirement did result from a budgetary process.	Budget amount for 2024/2025 should be clearly stated in the minutes of a Parish Council meeting, showing anticipated income and expenditure and it be approved before the precept amount is agreed. The precept amount should then be minuted separately.

Annual Return Section	**Process**	**Findings**	**Recommendations and actions**
D	Budgetary Controls (Budget monitoring)	Progress against the budget was monitored and minuted regularly.	No further recommendations.
D	Reserves were appropriate	The Council does have a Reserves Policy.	The Reserves Policy is published on the Council's web site but needs to be updated.
D	The final outturn is in line with expectations	The final outturn was materially in line with expectations.	No further recommendations.
E	Income controls	Expected income was fully received and properly recorded.	No further recommendations.
E	VAT	VAT had been appropriately accounted for.	No further recommendations.
F	Petty cash controls	Petty cash is not operated by the Council.	No further recommendations.
G	Payroll controls	Salaries to employees were paid in accordance with Council approvals.	Council could consider appointing an external company to run the payroll to remove the responsibility from the RFO. Staff entitled to a Working from Home Allowance of £26 per month.
H	Asset Controls - all material assets correctly recorded	The Asset Register has been published and uploaded onto the web site.	The 2024/2025 Asset Register be uploaded onto the Council's web site. Council could consider including photographs of assets in the Register. It be minuted when Council assets have been inspected.
H	Asset Controls - all additions and removals correctly recorded	Items have not been added but have been removed this financial year.	No further recommendations.
H	Asset Controls - all Deeds and Titles	Appropriate Deeds and Titles to be stablished; they are not shown on	Include references to Deeds and Titles in the Asset Register.

Annual Return Section	Process	Findings	Recommendations and actions
	established and shown on register?	the Register.	
H	Investment Registers	The Parish Council does have an Investments Strategy.	No further recommendations.
I	Bank Reconciliations	Periodic and year-end reconciliations were properly carried out.	No further recommendations.
J	Accounting Statements	The Accounting Statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis and were supported by an adequate audit trail.	No further recommendations.
K	Limited Assurance Review Exemption	The Council does not meet the exemption criteria.	No further recommendations.
L	Information published on website	The information is available.	No further recommendations.
M	Exercise of Public Rights	The Parish Council published the exercise of public rights notice on the website and noticeboard with the following dates: 10 June 2024 to 19 July 2024.	No further recommendations.

Annual Return Section	Process	Findings	Recommendations and actions
N	AGAR publication Requirements	The Parish Council has partially complied with the publication requirements for the 2023/2024 AGAR.	When the AGAR was approved by the Council on 4 June 2024, Section 1 of the AGAR should be approved before Section 2 and this should be stated clearly in the minutes. The minutes should also include the Council approving the year-end accounts for 2023/2024 and the Chairman signing them. Internal Auditor's section is missing from the Council's web site.
O	Trust funds (If applicable) – the Council met its responsibilities as a trustee	The Parish Council does not operate as a trustee.	No further recommendations.

Transparency Compliance 2023/2024

Process	Criteria	Findings	Recommendations and actions
Review of Internal audit action plan 2023/2024 has been considered and actioned?	Good Practice	The Internal Audit has been reviewed the previous year.	The Internal Auditor's report 2023/2024 be published on the Council's web site.
Accounting Statements agreed and reconciled to the Annual Return	Section 2 of the Annual Return is complete and accurate and reconciles to the statement of accounts.	Both reconcile.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	**Whilst the Parish does not fall into the criteria for Councils below the £25k threshold, it is good practice to conform to the criteria and publish the items below.**		

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Compliance with the Transparency Code	1) Expenditure over £100 is recorded on the Council website and with all information requirements	Available in the minutes.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	2) Annual Return published on the website	Partially available on the website.	Internal Auditor's Certificate 2023/2024 be published on the Council's web site.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	3) Explanation of significant variances	Not available on the website.	Explanation of Variances should be on web site.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	4) Explanation of difference between Box 7 & 8 if applicable	No difference.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	5) Annual Governance Statement recorded	Available on the website.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	6) Internal Audit Report Published	Not available on the website.	Internal Auditors report for 2023/2024 be published on the Council's web site.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	7) A List of Councillors' responsibilities	Available on the website.	No further recommendations
Compliance with the Transparency Code	8) Details of Public Land and Building Assets	2022-2023 version available on the website.	Needs updating and new version loading onto the web site.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	9) Minutes & Agenda	Available on the website.	No further recommendations

Further Recommendations

Process	Criteria	Findings	Recommendations and actions
Effectiveness of IA	Review the effectiveness of the Internal Audit	A review has not been undertaken	Following the completion of the Internal Audit 2023/2024, the Council should undertake a review of effectiveness as per Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
Register of Members' Interests	Published on Council web site	Not published	Register of Members' Interests should be published on the Council's web site or have a link from the Council's web site to the District Council's web site.
Councillor Email Accounts	.gov.uk email accounts for Clerk and Councillors	Clerk and Councillors have Council email addresses but not .gov.uk	As part of GDPR, it is recommended that all Councillors use the email addresses provided for them by the Council. These are preferably from the Council's domain name using '.gov.uk'
Mobile Phones	Mobile phones for all staff	Staff are not provided with Council mobile phones	Council considers mobile phones for all staff.

Theresa Goss
Internal Auditor
28 April 2025

WTG
CONSULTANTS