

BLYFORD AND SOTHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MAY 2023

INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 aims to strengthen governance and accountability through requirements related to internal control and internal audit.

Whilst the Parish Council has reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit (independence, competence, proportionate and scope), it has a requirement levied on it to ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control: -

'The regulations require active participation by members in providing positive assurance to the electors of their stewardship of public money. The framework of accountability is risk-based i.e. level of control and management must be appropriate to the risk involved. The Council must determine the most appropriate method of internal control. Care should be taken to ensure that internal control tests are proportionate and relevant and that they are neither seen as, nor intended as, undue interference in the RFO's day to day management of financial affairs.'

As part of its internal control, the Blyford and Sotherton Parish Council has appointed a non-signatory Councillor to conduct a review of the system of internal control via the following tests on a quarterly basis with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council and minuted as received.

CONTROL TEST	TEST DONE	COMMENTS – check documents and initial
	Yes or No	
Ensuring an up-to-date Register of Assets	Yes	Last updated on 21/11/2022
Regular maintenance arrangement for physical assets		10/07/22 An inspection of assets was carried out and presented to the Council at 18/07/22 meeting, Min 22/04
Annual review of risk and the adequacy of Insurance cover	Yes	January 2023 prior to approval of insurance quote at meeting on 16/01/23 Min 23/01
Annual review of financial risk	Yes	Reviewed and adopted 21/03/23 Min 23/02
Awareness of Standing Orders and Financial regulations	Yes	Updated from current SALC templates

Adoption of Financial and Standing Orders	Yes	Adopted 18/07/22 Min 22/04 and reviewed annually
Regular reporting on performance by contractors	Yes	Works inspected by a Parish Councillor and record kept on file.
Annual review of contracts (where appropriate)	N/A	
Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed	Yes	Submitted bi-monthly at Parish Council Meetings and minuted.
Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure	Yes	Submitted bi-monthly at Parish Council Meetings and minuted.
Payments supported by invoices, authorised and minuted	Yes	Invoices approved and authorised by 2 members of the Council at PC Meeting and minuted.
Regular scrutiny of income records to ensure income is correctly received, recorded and banked	Yes	Quarterly check of Accounts Spreadsheet.
Scrutiny to ensure precept recorded in the Accounts Spreadsheet agrees to District Council notification	Yes	By RFO/Clerk and submitted to Council at next meeting following payment.
Contracts of employment for staff	Yes	Last review and update 16/01/23 Min 23/01
Contract annually reviewed	Yes	Updated employment contract prior to meeting on 16/01/23. Min 23/01
Updating records to record changes in relevant legislation	Yes	As and when received by Clerk/RFO and presented to Council.
PAYE/NIC properly operated by the Council as an employer	Yes	Operated by SALC Payroll Services. Payslip approved at Council's by-monthly meeting

		with 2 signatories signing and online payments made by RFO and signatory.
VAT correctly accounted for VAT payments identified, recorded and reclaimed in the cashbook	Yes	VAT payments identified in Accounts Spreadsheet and claims submitted annually or when balance reaches £100.
Regular financial reporting to Parish Council	Yes	Bi-monthly at council meetings in the form of a Bank Reconciliation and quarterly review of Accounts Spreadsheet. All minuted.
Regular budget monitoring statements as reported to Parish Council	Yes	Ongoing and reviewed with half-year and quarterly updates.
Compliance with Local Transparency Code Of 2014: Items of expenditure incurred over £500	Yes	Public access to Bank Reconciliations and minutes on Noticeboard and Website.
Verifying that the Council is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation Requirements – Are the following in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit / Impact Assessment • Privacy Notices • Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests • Procedure for dealing with Data breaches Data Retention & Disposal Policies	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	Clerk presents all these documents to Council annually and uploaded to our website, in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation Requirements.
Minutes properly numbered and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paginated with a master copy kept in for safekeeping 	Yes	Hard copy in minute folder. Soft copy on Clerk's Laptop and back-up memory card. Public access copies kept on our website.

Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' Interests and Gifts of Hospitality.	Yes	Online system run by local authority
Adoption of Codes of Conduct for Members	Yes	18/07/22 formerly accepted. Min 22/04 All Parish Councillors receive a copy on election/co-option.
Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Yes	DAO signed at next meeting following election/co-option. Hard and soft copies held by Clerk.

Date of review of system of Internal Controls..... 15th MAY 2023

Review of system of Internal Controls carried out by:

Name..... BERL GOLDBART Signature..... *Berl Goldbart*

Report submitted to Council (date)..... 15th MAY 2023

(minute reference)

Next review of system of Internal Controls due May 2024

Additional comments by reviewer: