

Claire Connell MA, ACA, CTA

Chartered Accountant and Chartered Tax Adviser

86 Silverdale Road
Earley

Reading RG6 7LT

Tel: 0118 966 9706

Email: accounts@claireconnell.co.uk

The Members of Brimpton Parish Council
c/o Mrs C McGarvie
Clerk to Brimpton Parish Council
71 Pelican Road
Pamber Heath
Tadley RG26 3EL

10th May 2023

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

Internal Audit Report for the year ended 31st March 2023

Local councils are required to have an internal audit of their accounting records and their system of internal control by Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. In May 2023 I reviewed the financial systems and controls for the year to date, together with the financial statements and annual return.

My internal audit testing was based on the guidelines included in the revised NALC Governance & Accountability Practitioners Guide. The internal controls in place were confirmed and a series of tests using the financial records, vouchers, minutes, previous audit reports etc were conducted to establish the effectiveness of these controls.

Overall conclusion

Generally, the financial records are well maintained and appear complete and fit for purpose. The control systems and procedures appear efficient and effective. There are no matters that I need to draw to your attention.

Detailed report (structured around the questions in the annual internal audit report in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return)

As part of the testing I checked:

- A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the year**
 - The accounts have been maintained in an Excel spreadsheet which is quite adequate for councils of this size. The accounting records have been kept up to date.
- B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for**
 - The cashbook was reviewed for the year. A sample of payment invoices was checked to ensure that they had been approved, correctly paid and VAT treated correctly. No errors were found.
 - The Council has a corporate credit card for use by the clerk. This is paid in full by direct debit each month.
 - The largest contract was awarded to the Wasing Estate's preferred contractor as it was for the fencing around land leased from the Estate.

C. Council has proper risk assessment & management procedures

- Council minutes were scrutinised
- Insurance cover is obtained from Zurich which offers a Local Councils policy.
- Standing Orders were updated in May 2021 and reapproved in May 2022. The Financial Regulations were updated in July 2020 and reapproved in May 2021 and 2022.
- A monthly finance report showing receipts and payments and a bank reconciliation is taken to Council each month.
- The Risk Management Scheme was approved in May 2022 and will be reviewed again prior to the approval of the AGAR in May 2023. The scheme appears appropriate given the size and nature of the Council's activities.

D. The Precept resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate

- The report for the budget for 2022-23 was reviewed and the process appeared thorough. The budget setting process included a review of reserves held by the Council as well as a review of the current year income and expenditure against budget. Once again a zero precept request was made.
- Periodic reports showing income and expenditure against budget were provided to the Council.

E. Expected income was received, recorded and banked; VAT appropriately accounted for

- The Excel spreadsheet was reviewed
- The grant receipt was agreed to Council minutes and bank statements
- The VAT claim for the year was reviewed.

F. Petty Cash expenditure supported

- No petty cash is maintained by Brimpton Parish Council

G. Payroll properly prepared, authorised and PAYE/NI requirements fulfilled

- Payroll is prepared in house using the HMRC basic tools package. No problems were identified.
- Back pay following the announcement of the increase to the nationally agreed payscale was paid correctly.

H. Fixed assets register properly reflects the Council's assets

- The fixed asset register is maintained in Excel. Additions purchased in the year have been correctly added.

I. Periodic and year-end bank reconciliations properly carried out

- The bank reconciliations were reviewed. These are reviewed and initialled by a councillor.

J. Accounting statements and annual return

- The financial statements, annual return and supporting documentation for the annual return were reviewed and agreed to the cashbook.
- The accounting statements were prepared on the correct basis.
- An adequate audit trail from underlying records exists.

K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt

- The Council did meet the exemption criteria in 2021/22 and correctly declared itself exempt.

L. The authority published the required information on a website up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The Council is required to comply with publishing requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code.

The Council published the necessary information for the year ended 31st March 2023 as shown below.

Item	Compliant?
All items of expenditure > £100	All payments are published All receipts are also published
End of year accounts	Yes, all documents available including the variance analysis and the end of year bank reconciliation
Annual governance statement	Yes
Internal audit report	Yes
List of councillor responsibilities	Yes all councillors are listed and the Chairman is identified
Details of public land & building assets	The fixed asset register is published on the website.
Minutes, agendas & meeting papers of formal meetings	Yes, these are all available
AGARs for the past five years	Yes, these are available on the website, together with the information required to be published by councils claiming exemption from external audit.

M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations

- The Council provided the opportunity for the exercise of public rights for the correct number of days, within the correct timeframe and this was advertised correctly on the website.

N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2021/22 AGAR (as per AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)

- Yes the Council published all the documents listed on page 1 of the AGAR at the correct time.

O. The council met its responsibilities as a trustee of trust funds

- Not applicable – the Council is not a trustee of any trust funds

I trust that these comments are self-explanatory, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further details.

Yours faithfully

Claire Connell

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