



ASHLEWORTH PARISH COUNCIL
Internal auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2022
Name of Auditor: Sally Jones

GAPTC internal audits comply with the proper practices outlined in the Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities – A Practitioners' Guide and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The GAPTC internal audit reviews and reports on whether the systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective. The audit tests a variety of documents, including agendas and minutes, policies, insurance and risk management processes, to ensure Council meets the requirements set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return. The internal audit does not involve the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of an authority in order to detect error or fraud.

Our auditors are independent of the Council and are competent to be able to carry out the requirements of the internal audit service.

NOTE The auditor will complete the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) page on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). The AIAR informs the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) assertions on the AGAR, so when council reviews the AGS, the responses must reflect the AIAR report.

1. Council working documents

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
1.1	Have Standing Orders been a) tailored to council?	a) Yes b) Yes		Tailored to Council Reviewed May 2021 Min Ref 918/0521 a using most recent NALC version On Website

	b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted?	c) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
1.2	Have Financial Regulations been a) tailored to council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? (Objective B)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Tailored to Council Reviewed May 2021 Min Ref 918/0521 b using most recent NALC version On Website
1.3	Does the council a) give grants? b) have a grant-awarding policy?	a) No but b) N/A		Council does not give grants, although payments made to church for grass cutting (see 2.2)
1.4	Have items/ services been competitively purchased in accordance with Financial and/or Procurement Regulations?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2 & 3	Only item purchased during financial year was a dog bin from Tewkesbury Borough Council.
1.5	Code of conduct reviewed in the last 2/3 years?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Reviewed May 2021 Min Ref 918/0521 f

2. Finance

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
2.1	Has the General Power of Competence been adopted (e.g. a minute reference), if Council qualifies?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Council not eligible
2.2	S137 a) is there a separate account for payments? b) are totals within statutory limits? (for Council's that do not held General Power of Competence)	a) Yes b) Yes	Note that spending on the church is a grey area as the LGA1894 Act prohibits local councils from spending on property relating to affairs of the church and could be challenged. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1 & 3	S.137 column on cashbook Payment of £800 paid to Church July 2021 Min Ref 944/0721 a (3)
2.3	Is there an annual council authorisation of Direct Debit list and Standing Orders? (Objective B)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	No Direct Debits or Standing Orders
2.4	Was Petty Cash expenditure approved, if any? (Objective F)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Council does not use petty cash

2.5	Is all expenditure supported by VAT invoices, if applicable? (Objective B)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Viewed during meeting 13/5/2022
2.6	VAT – a) recorded in accounts b) reclaimed? (Objective B)	a) Yes b) No	Recommend that a VAT reclaim is submitted when minimum £100 limit is reached. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Cashbook

3. Risk management

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
3.1	Insurance policy a) in place? b) cover reviewed to ensure still fit for purpose? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Reviewed at May 2021 meeting minute ref 916/0521
3.2	Copy of Risk Management policy a) adopted? b) reviewed annually by Council? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Reviewed May 2021 Minute Reference 918/0521 (e)

3.3	Asset register a) reviewed regularly? (Objective H) b) published on website? (Objective L)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Asset Register reviewed May 2021 Minute Reference 0521 (d) on Website
3.4	Evidence that assets a) have been inspected for risk? b) reported in minutes? c) any actions undertaken? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Playground inspected monthly by Councillor. Annual Inspection report seen and reviewed at May meeting 2021 Minute Ref 915/0521 Council have acted on recommendations from the report. Clerk inspects Defibrillator monthly and completes a report to The Circuit – report seen for April 2022
3.5	Evidence that internal controls a) take place? b) are documented? c) minuted? as per Council's Financial Regulations/Standin g Orders (Objective B)	a) No b) No c) No	Recommend putting in place Internal Control Check form and then getting Councillor to complete and sign and record in the minutes Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	No Internal Controls currently in place outside of the meetings when the accounts are presented.
3.6	Bank reconciliations are on agenda to be considered by Council? (Objective I)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Examples July 2021 Min Ref 944/0721 (b) January 2022 Min Ref 998/0122 (b)

3.7	Review of a) investments? b) bank mandates (signatories on bank accounts)? (Objective B/C)	a) No b) No	Recommend reviewing investments and confirming and minuting the bank signatories annually Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Signatories have remained the same for the past 3 years.
3.8	If bank cards in use, are proper procedures in place? (Objective B)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
3.9	Are a) physical records secure? b) electronic records backed up?	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Council holds 3 memory sticks – Clerk holds 2 and carries out backups regularly. The 3 rd is held by the chairman - they are rotated and it is minuted at each meeting Physical records are held at Clerk's address in a secure Council Filing cabinet

4. Budgetary controls

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
4.1	Was a budget properly for the year under review a) prepared? b) adopted? c) minuted? (Objective D)	a) Yes b) Yes but ... c) Yes but ...	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	The budget was prepared and placed on the website – no meetings took place between September 2020 and March 2021 however the Clerk/RFO liaised with Councillors and Tewkesbury Borough Council and a statement was placed on the Council's website. Budget was minuted as adopted March 2021 meeting Minute Reference 896/0321

4.2	<p>a) Were the earmarked objectives of the reserves identified in the budget, if any?</p> <p>b) Were the general reserves reasonable? (Objective D)</p>	<p>a) Yes</p> <p>b) Yes</p>	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Details on Budget displayed on website with details of earmarked reserves and general reserves.
4.3	Was the precept demand for the year under review properly minuted in full council?	Yes but ...	Clerk informed me that it was not possible to hold a zoom meeting in January 2021 and due to Covid restrictions no face-to-face meeting could be held. Recommend that Council has a plan in place to deal with any future meeting cancellations.	<p>Minuted March 2021 meeting Minute Reference 897/0321</p> <p>Following statement was made.</p> <p>Precept based on budget review</p> <p>Clerk/RFO reported that the precept amount had to be submitted by the end of January and following the circulation of the Budget for 2020/2021, it was agreed that the precept submitted will be the same as last year at £5000. The decision was unusually decided via email as APC could not have a face-to-face meeting due to Covid-19 restrictions. Following guidance from Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) and in line with the transparency code, the following statement was publicised on the website:</p> <p>Please note that due to the cancellation of the Ashleworth Parish Council January meeting because of Covid restrictions, the agenda item of the Precept amount must still be submitted to TBC by the 31st of January. The Parish Council have requested that the amount remains the same as last year at £5000 (five thousand pounds) and should any members of the public wish for more information or to discuss, please contact the clerk no later than 28th January.</p>
4.4	Did the council a) regularly compare budget vs spend (as detailed	<p>a) Yes</p> <p>b) Yes</p>		<p>Council compares Budget to Spend at each meeting.</p> <p>Example July 2021 Min Ref 944/0721</p>

	in the financial regulations) b) and evidenced in the minutes? (Objective D)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	January 2022 Min Ref835/0120
4.5	Are any significant variances from budget reported?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	

5. Payroll

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
5.1	Do all staff have a contract of employment?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Clerk has contract in place
5.2	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by Council? (Objective G)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Cheque book and bank statement as well as minutes
5.3	Has Council a) registered as an employer with HMRC? b) have PAYE / NIC been properly dealt with (including year-end procedures)? (Objective G)	a) Yes b) Yes		Done through HMRC online – copy viewed of submission

5.4	Are Councillor's allowances and expenses properly authorised & controlled, if any?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
5.5	Pension provision – eligible employees a) offered pension scheme? b) outcome minuted?	a) Yes b) No	Recommend that any reviews of pension discussed in future are minuted. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Clerk opted out of NEST Pension when offered it in 2018. Not minuted
5.6	Is Council a) registered with the Pension Regulator for auto-enrolment pensions? b) Has auto-enrolment registration with Pension Regulator been reviewed (required every 3 years)	a) Yes b) Yes	Re-enrolment will be due in 2022 Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Re-enrolment completed November 2019

6. Year-end procedures

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
6.1	Are debtors and creditors recorded properly on separate balance sheet if using Income & Expenditure reporting? (Objective J)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
6.2	Does Council as a whole consider the year-end accounts in addition to 6.5? (Objective J)	No	Recommend that Council reviews accounts at year end and minutes this. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Council does Reconciliations at each meeting.
6.3	Minute confirming that council is eligible for Certificate of Exemption (only for councils with a turnover of less than £25,000) (Objective K)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Minutes May 2021 Minute Ref 919/0521
6.4	Annual Governance Statement, section 1 of Annual Return, approved by whole	Yes		Minutes May 20221 Min Ref 920/0521

	council (with separate minute number from Section 2 below)?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
6.5	Annual Statement of Accounts, section 2 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 1 above)?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Minutes May 2021 Min Ref 921/0521
6.6	Are all sections of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return published on the website? (Objective L/N)	Yes but ..	Recommend that Section 1 is added to the Council Website Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Section 1 approved at May 2021 meeting Council's website
6.7	Did council correctly provide for the exercise of public rights? (Objective M)	Yes	Recommend that Council Minutes the dates of Exercise of Public Rights Annual Governance Statement Assertion 4	Published on Website
6.8	Previous internal audit report reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7	Minutes July 2021 Min Ref 943/0721
6.9	Previous external audit report (for councils with	N/A		

	turnover over £25,000) reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7	
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7. Other matters

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
7.1	Policies in place for compliance with GDPR, such as Data Protection Policy for Staff & Councillors and for the public?	Yes	Recommend that GDPR policy for Staff and Councillors is added to the current year folder on the website Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Both on website
7.2	Is the Council a Managing Trustee?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9	
7.3	Do trustees meet at least once a year and publish separate accounts? (Objective O)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9	
7.4	Website Accessibility Statement on website home page?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	On Website

7.5	Did council formally appoint GAPTC as the Internal Auditor?	Yes	Recommend that Council confirms that the Internal Auditor is competent and independent of Council when appointing them Annual Governance Statement Assertion 6	March meeting 2022 min ref 014/0322
7.6	Are registers up to date for council-owned burial grounds (if any) and purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burials certificate completed?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	

8. Procedures

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments	Evidence
8.1	Minutes: a) DPIs or other interests recorded? b) published on website in draft form within one month (mandatory for councillors with a turnover of less than £25,000)? (Objective L) c) initialled on each	a) Yes b) Yes but c) Yes	March 2022 meeting not on website within the one month deadline – Clerk advised me that there had been some technical problem with the website which has since been resolved.	Yes – example May 2021 Min Ref 905/0521 On Website Minutes viewed during meeting 13/5/2021

	page and final page signed?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
8.2	List of members' a) responsibilities (Objective L) and b) interests held and published on the website?	a) Yes b) No but ...	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	List of members and responsibilities on the website Tewkesbury Borough Councils monitoring Officer does not allow these to be published
8.3	Agendas signed and displayed on website/noticeboards 3 clear days' prior to meeting? (Objective L)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Checked the current agendas on the website
8.4	Summons issued in proper format?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Checked on the website