

CREETING ST PETER PARISH COUNCIL

Review of Internal Controls Checklist

Adopted on 22 January 2024

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 aims to strengthen governance and accountability. This is achieved through internal control and internal audit. This is documented as “a relevant authority must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which:

- a) facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and achievement of its aims and objectives;
- b) ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and
- c) includes effective arrangements for the management of risk.

A relevant authority must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes.”

The Council has determined that there should be an annual review of the internal controls and that this is carried out by an independent person who is neither the Responsible Financial Officer nor a Councillor who is a cheque signatory. This will create a written document which is submitted to the Council for approval by the end of the year. These internal checks are in addition to the work carried out by the Council’s internal and external auditors following the end of the financial year.

Control Test	Comments & Documents Checked
(1) There is an up to date asset register.	Yes – seen for 2022/23 – approved in minutes of 17/05/2023.
(2) There have been reviews of risk and the adequacy of insurance cover.	Yes – approved in minutes 18/09/2023
(3) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations have been adopted during the year.	Yes – seen that it has been approved and adopted in 17/05/2023 meeting

<p>(4) There has been a review and approval of a risk assessment.</p>	<p>Yes – seen for 1/4/22 – 31/03/23 agreed and approved at 20/03/2023 meeting.</p>
<p>(5) An annual review of the budget for the following financial year has taken place.</p>	<p>Yes - Review of the budget has taken place and approved for 2024/25 – at 20/11/23 meeting</p>
<p>(6) A bank reconciliation has taken place on a minimum quarterly basis.</p>	<p>I have seen 4 Bank reconciliations, but only 3 of these noted and approved in the meeting minutes. No evidence submitted of the 1 April – 19 June 2023 being approved by the Parish Council. Unsure why the reconciliations are June and July and not a larger gap – no evidence submitted to explain this.</p>
<p>(7) Payments are supported by invoices, approval and inclusion in the minutes.</p>	<p>Authorisations and invoices have been seen – but no evidence of them being approved in the minutes have been submitted.</p>
<p>(8) Receipts have supporting documentation, are reviewed and included in the minutes.</p>	<p>5 June – interest is in 4 payments totalling £28.98, but in the meeting minutes of 17/07/23 it states £15.42 – unsure why the discrepancy 6 July – this is for a Tax refund of £78.11 – evidence seen – but not on the meeting minutes until 20/11/2023 – not included in the September meeting minutes although bank statement issued 20 July. 19th July – bank interest of £13.56 – confirmed as received in the meeting minutes, but not mentioned in the receipts and budget for 2023/24 and no corresponding bank statement submitted. 18/08/23 meeting minutes has £13.56 interest paid as a receipt, but no supporting documents</p>
<p>(9) The precept requested has been received.</p>	<p>Yes – evidence seen for 2023/24</p>
<p>(10) There is a contract of employment for staff.</p>	<p>Yes -seen for both Parish Clerk (signed by Chair 20/11/23) and RFO (signed by Chair 20/11/23)</p>

<p>(11) VAT has been correctly accounted for during the year and a claim has been made for the return of VAT paid in the previous year.</p>	<p>Yes seen evidence for 2 VAT claims for 2023 – received and in the receipts.</p>
<p>(12) S137 payments have been accounted for and included in the minutes.</p>	<p>There were no S137 payments in the payment/budget for 2023/24.</p>
<p>(13) The budget has been monitored on a minimum quarterly basis.</p>	<p>Evidence of the budget in the minutes has been seen 3 times – July, October and December – so not quarterly</p>
<p>(14) Approved minutes have been signed and retained.</p>	<p>Yes – seen on the Parish council website</p>
<p>(15) A Declaration of Acceptance of Office form has been completed by both the Chair and Vice Chair and any other Council Members appointed during the year.</p>	<p>Yes- evidence seen for all councillors and a separate one seen for the chair and vice chair</p>
<p>(16) An impact assessment audit has been carried out for any new policy which has potential GDPR implications.</p>	<p>Yes – evidence seen</p>
<p>(17) The Council's declaration of compliance under The Pensions Act 2008 is on course to be completed every three years.</p>	<p>An email seen of re-declaration – but not clear from the email that it fulfils this criterion.</p>
<p>(18) The Council has reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit, including coverage and independence of the work carried out, access to the RFO and the timely follow up of the implementation of recommendations and addressing of comments made.</p>	<p>Yes – evidence seen</p>
<p>(19) An Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the previous year has been completed, approved and submitted to the external auditor by the end of June.</p>	<p>Yes – Evidence seen</p>

<p>(20) A review of the bank mandate has been carried out with attention given to enough signatories provided by current councillors and the removal of any who are no longer in post.</p>	<p>Yes – a review has happened and evidence seen that the address for the bank statements has been amended and former Parish councillors have been removed. But - Still only 2 signatories (Cllr Valladares and Cllr Mason) Action to add additional signatories is still outstanding</p>
<p>(21) Documents in support of the above points have been retained and filed by the Parish Clerk/RFO.</p>	<p>The majority of the evidence has been seen to support the above points. The signed minutes are available on our website.</p>
<p>(22) These areas have therefore been identified as still requiring action before the end of the year.</p>	<p>6– need to submit minutes as evidence to clearly show that this has been met. 8 – some discrepancies that need to be addressed or explained 13 – evidence of the budget in the minutes has not been submitted every quarter. 17 – not clear that this criterion has been met 20 – Additional signatories need to be added for the bank mandate</p>

Date of Review 12/03/2024

Reviewed by Ayse Singh

Signature

RFO

Signature

Parish Clerk

Signature