

Annual Internal Auditor's report 2020/21 Chesham Bois Parish Council

I have carried out a selective assessment of the Council's compliance with relevant procedures and controls, which I expected to be in operation during the year ended 31st March 2021. Due to Covid-19 restrictions this internal audit has been conducted electronically utilising requested documents provided by the Clerk as well as those present on the Parish Council website at [Chesham Bois PC](#)

Evidence of Budget Process

I was able to see the budget process and the setting of the precept which was approved at a full council meeting (Dec 2019 for 2020/21). Similarly, the budget and precept were reviewed and approved for 2021/22 in Dec 2020.

Cash book/Accounts book

A random check has been made to verify that invoices have been analysed and correctly entered in the cash book. It is recommended that the authorising bank signatories initial the invoices when reviewing. Monthly expenditure is listed in the minutes.

Bank reconciliations

A bank reconciliation is made monthly and presented to full Council quarterly. A Councillor reviews and signs off the quarterly reconciliation. It is recommended that the Parish Council investigates other deposit account providers as NS & I's interest rates have fallen dramatically. It is noted that this was discussed at the March 2021 meeting.

Minute book

Samples of the minute book were checked. Each page of the minutes has been initialled by the Chairman before signing the final page.

Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2019-20

Notice of Electors' Rights and Conclusion of Audit – on website. All year-end financial documents available on website.

Election of Chairman & Vice-Chairman at May 2020 Annual PC meeting

Due to Covid-19, Parish Councils were exempted from this for 2020-21

Councillors' Registers of Interests

These are available online. It is suggested that individual councillor's signatures are redacted.

Insurance details

The Parish Council's insurance policy was checked and found to be in order. However, it was noted that streetlights are not insured and the Parish Council may wish to investigate the value of so doing. Assets added during the year should be added to the policy at time of acquisition rather than waiting for renewal.

VAT returns

VAT had been recorded appropriately and reclaimed quarterly.

Income tax returns

It was verified that PAYE and National Insurance is dealt with correctly via a payroll provider.

Year-end accounts, including bank reconciliation, income & expenditure

The year-end figures were checked and found to be in order. The end of year bank reconciliation with the cash book balanced.

Asset register

An up-to-date asset register is maintained and approved by the council. Plans are still to be agreed for a system of physically verifying/inspecting assets.

Petty cash records, if applicable

An outstanding account of £1.79 is still to be closed and transferred to the main account

Standing Orders & Financial Regulations

In place, based upon the NALC model templates. To be reviewed annually or when updates are available.

Other Governance Documents & Policies

These are in place and regularly reviewed.

Approval of internal auditor

Approved at March 2021 meeting

Risk assessment(s)

In place, comprehensive and reviewed annually

Pensions Regulations

Duties under the Pension Act 2008 have been complied with

Website Accessibility

The website contains an accessibility statement. It is recommended that the website is tested regularly, and in particular PDF documents such as agendas and minutes. A random check showed some documents to not be fully compliant with PDF/A standards. A useful tool is <http://checkers.eiii.eu/en/pdfcheck/>

Comments:

Except for items noted/recommended above, the standard of administration and system of internal controls relating to the audit areas examined was currently considered to be of a good standard. Some recommendations have been made to further improve and conform with best practices.

Having completed a comprehensive examination of Council records made available to me, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and 2006, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015/494 and as directed in "Joint Panel on Accountability and Practitioners' Guide March 2020", I have completed page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 positively, and can give reasonable assurance from the audit work undertaken that the Council's financial affairs are being properly conducted.

Signature:

Date: 10th May 2021

Deborah O'Brien

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