

Internal Audit Report 2024/2025

North Killingholme Parish Council

Recommendations

Based on my findings highlighted in the report attached I would recommend the Council looks at the following areas:

- Ensure the Exercise of Public Rights, and all the year end documentation, is published correctly, this is a requirement of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, this was advised last year. The assertion made by the Council in Box 4 of the Annual Governance statement should be NO.
- Have the budget on the website for transparency as advised last year
- Update the website with missing agenda and minutes
- Fix the link to Councillor's Register of Interest Forms on the website as advised last year
- Work towards getting a ".gov.uk" email address, this will be an audit requirement next year and a new assertion on the Annual Governance Statement
- The first agenda item at the Annual Council meeting must be the election of the Chair
- The Chair needs to call the Annual Parish Meeting with 7 clear days notice as highlighted last year

Andy Hopkins PSLCC PIALC

Internal Auditor

May 2025

North Killingholme Parish Council

Annual Governance and Accountability Internal Audit Report 2024/25

| Item | Check | Notes/Findings |
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| Minutes and Agendas | That they are kept correctly, numbered, initialled and signed by Chairman etc. as well as Committee meetings and that meetings are called lawfully. | <p>Ordinary Council meetings have been called correctly.</p> <p>Extraordinary meetings should be called by the Chair not the Clerk with 7 days notice as reported last year.</p> <p>Most minutes and agendas have been uploaded to the website, the agenda for 13 Jan 2025 and the minutes for 5 March 2025 are not on the website.</p> <p>The first agenda item at the Annual Council meeting must be the election of the Chair.</p> |
| Purchase Invoices | Kept and VAT invoices where appropriate and marked with cheque numbers for reference. | Invoices are prepared each month for the Council to approve. |
| VAT | Where applicable correctly recorded and reclaimed for previous year. | A VAT claim was made for for £2729.63 in March 2025. |
| Sales Invoices | Produced timely and correctly and supported by appropriate paperwork such as diaries/emails etc. | NA |
| Credit Control/Debts | That any sales invoices are credit controlled and payments chased. | NA |
| Receipts and Payments | That payments are made properly by cheque/BACS/DD/SO | A payment schedule is produced for each meeting and signed off. |

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| | and properly recorded and that receipts are also made properly and properly recorded and supported by paperwork trail. | Scribe accounting software is used for the Clerk to manage accounts better. |
| Staffing/Personnel | That staff have appropriate contracts and procedures are in place for personnel management. | The Personnel Committee oversee staffing matters and creating a contract for the cleaner was assigned to the Committee. The Clerk has a written statement of particulars. |
| Payroll | That appropriate payroll system is in place and supporting information for pay rates/salary levels etc. | Phoenix payroll system has been put in place for payroll and pension payments. |
| Governance | That Standing Orders/Finance Regs/Insurance and all other policy documents are in place and that they are reviewed at least annually. | The Council correctly declared an exemption for 2023/24. Standing Orders & Financial Regulations, and other policies, were reviewed in February 2024. The Financial Regulations need updating as there is a new model document. The Data Protection Policy on the website is not a policy, it is the NALC's Legal Topic Note 38. Insurance was reviewed in July 24. The AGAR has not been uploaded to the website, apart from the Exemption Certificate. There is no Exercise of Public Rights on the website. There is no Conclusion of Audit on the website. |

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| | | <p>There is no Internal Audit report on the website.</p> <p>The link to the Councillor's Register of Interest Forms on the website still does not work.</p> |
| Transparency | | <p>Some minutes need a bit more detail so that those not attending can understand what was discussed and agreed.</p> <p>There is no budget on the website.</p> <p>Should Cllr Greenwood be declaring an interest for PRAX LOR at meetings?</p> |
| Cash handling | That all cash handled is subject to audit/security trail and this is adhered to. | No petty cash. |
| Budgets and Monitoring | That a budget is in place and adhered to, with monitoring. | <p>The budget and precept were agreed at the 9 Dec 24 meeting.</p> <p>The budget is not on the website.</p> <p>Quarterly Budget reporting has been put in place.</p> |
| Accounting/Finance | That at least quarterly account reconciliations are in place and presented to Council. | <p>There are regular bank reconciliations.</p> <p>Scribe accounting software is used for the Clerk to manage accounts better.</p> <p>Online banking has been set up.</p> <p>The Asset Register has been updated.</p> |
| Accountability | That Councillors sign cheque book stubs, initial and sign finance information presented and are presented with | A payment schedule is produced for each meeting and signed off. |

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| | information to allow accountability. | |
| Audit | That internal audit is carried out with report presented to Council and that external audit paperwork is correctly completed and presented to Council and followed up with any appropriate actions. | The Internal Audit was discussed at 10 June 24 meeting but has not been uploaded to the website. |
| Precept and grants | That precept level is officially set and communicated to local authority and correctly received. | The precept was agreed by Council in 18 Jan 24 and sent to NLC. |
| Section 137 | That it is separately recorded, and cap adhered to. | S137 spend and should be clearly marked as such. |
| Other notes | .gov.uk email | <p>Councils are advised to get an approved .gov.uk email account. This will be an audit requirement for next year.</p> <p>The importance of using .gov.uk domains for websites and emails</p> <p>1 All Parish, Town and Community Councils are eligible to use, and are advised to use, a .gov.uk domain for their websites and email communications. Your community, suppliers and partners will now reasonably expect a local council to have a .gov.uk domain name. Note that Parish meetings are exempt from the requirement to have a website.</p> <p>2 To assist with compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), it is advised that clerks provide official .gov.uk email accounts to their councillors, which must only be used for official council business.</p> <p>3 When choosing a domain name all councils must follow the rules set out by the Cabinet Office to choose a .gov.uk domain</p> |

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| | | <p>name, for example, 'ourparishcouncil.gov.uk' with email addresses linked to that domain.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Using a .gov.uk domain for your council website and email accounts gives Parish Councils the following advantages:2 Increased professionalism and trust from members of your community, partners and suppliers because your email address and website domains are a trusted government brand.3 Separation of your personal life from your professional life, ensuring members of your community, partners and suppliers understand what capacity you are emailing them in - whether a Councillor or Clerk.4 Increased control for the Responsible Officer over email accounts and documentation when managing new joiners, leavers, sudden absences or Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests.5 Peace of mind that your .gov.uk Parish Council domain will never be sold to someone else if it is not renewed on time, which can happen with .co.uk, .org.uk and other commercial domains.6 Additional security measures, as all .gov.uk domains are checked for any cyber vulnerabilities by the Cabinet Office and reported to the Responsible Owner, or your technical point of contact, so they can be fixed.7 You can read more about the benefits of getting a .gov.uk domain on the GOV.UK website. |
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