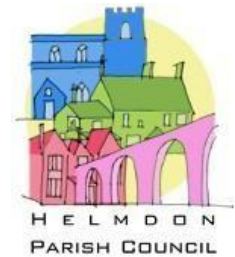




# HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

## EFFECTIVENESS OF SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND INTERNAL AUDIT



### SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Helmdon Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standard, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk and for reviewing the effectiveness of internal audit.

### PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

<b>THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT</b>	
<b>THE COUNCIL</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
The Council has appointed a Chair who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves the budget and precept for the following year at the January meeting following detailed recommendations from the Finance Committee.	14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2026 for 2026/27 financial year
The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls systems and procedures.	Quarterly
An Internal Control Councillor makes random checks on the accounts, following an invoice from payment, through the finance and administration system to bank statement entries.	Quarterly
The Finance Committee meets regularly to review actual versus budgeted expenditure and insurance details.	Quarterly
Tenders are sought under the Finance Regulations rules to ensure that the Parish Council offers value for money.	On going
<b>THE CLERK/RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER</b>	
The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.	Yes
The Clerk should hold or be working towards a CiLCA certificate.	Yes
Year-end accounts will be prepared by the RFO for circulation to the Parish Council by the May meeting of the Finance Committee following the financial year-end on 31 <sup>st</sup> March.	Yes



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## EFFECTIVENESS OF SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND INTERNAL AUDIT



<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
All bills for payment are presented to the Council for approval. Online banking is used wherever possible to produce BACS payments under a three stage process (each payment is created by the Clerk and then authorised by two Councillors). Where cheques are still used then two authorised signatories must sign each cheque and cheque stub.	Yes
<b>RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY</b>	
The Parish Council has a comprehensive risk assessment policy which is reviewed annually.	Yes
<b>INTERNAL AUDIT</b>	
The Parish Council has adopted Terms of Reference for the Internal Audit which are reviewed every three years.	Yes
The Internal Audit is timed to comply with the Annual Return timescales.	Yes
Full rights of access are given to the Internal Auditor regarding records and documentation.	Yes
The Internal Auditor makes an independent report to the Parish Council.	
The report is reviewed by the Parish Council.	
The Internal Auditor will follow up any actions required by review in subsequent audits.	N/A

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Date for next review: May 2027