

Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Internal Audit Report in the

Name of council:	Tilton on the Hill & Halstead Parish Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	Deborah Rolfe	Date of report:	08/05/2024
Year ending:	31 March 2024	Date audit carried out:	April/May 2024

(Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. Managing the council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and management and not left for internal audit. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The proper practices referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations are set out in JPAG Practitioners Guide 2022. It is a guide to the accounting practices to be followed by local councils and it sets out the appropriate standard of financial reporting to be followed.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

I would firstly like to thank your clerk Jenny for her time and assistance when carrying out the audit. The report was compiled during April and May and included inspection of the council website and documents requested from the clerk to the council.

I have examined council business, including policies, agendas and minutes, accounting and financial statements and other relevant documents necessary to complete this audit.

There were no matters raised on the Internal Audit for 2022/23.

Comments and Recommendations for 2023/24

Meetings Called Lawfully — The law says the agenda is the means of summoning a member to a meetings so the practice of not naming the councillors on the agenda is incorrect. It is therefore recommended that all councillors names be listed when preparing the agenda for publication.

AOB - AOB is not permissible; all items of business to be transacted must be specified on the Agenda, issued 3 working days in advance of the meeting so the public know and can attend if they wish. The reason is to prevent the council from discussing, say a planning application on which residents might have a view or an individual member raising an item like pulling a rabbit out of a hat. The preferred alternative, used by many councils is 'Items for information only' or 'Items for the next meeting'. Matters discussed and

any decisions taken under AOB risk being declared ultra vires. It is therefore recommended that you no longer have AOB as an agenda item.

Election of Chair - It is a legal requirement that the election of Chairman is the first item (LGA 72 s 15(2)). At the meeting dated 22nd May 2023 the election of chair was noted as the 3rd item.

Regulatory Documentation:- There were a number of documents that had been reviewed within the financial year however this was not evident when reviewing them on the website. It is recommended that you note the date and minute agenda item number on the document to show date of last review even if no changes have been made.

Reserves Policy:- The council currently hold reserves of £5723.99. There is no policy in place. It is recommended that the council review this and adopt a policy in line with the regulations as detailed in the Practitioners Guide section 5.31 — 5.39

Audit Trail and Financial Review— It was noted that the savings account could not be reconciled; I understand this is a long standing problem that has existed for more than just this audit year. As such, I have marked 'no' to items J in the AIAR and the council should now take action to resolve the error / anomaly, if necessary with the account provider, without delay.

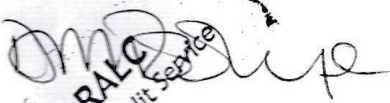
Invoices are paid by cheque, signed and authorised by two council signatories. It is recommended that you look into online banking for ease of transactions.

Good Practice/Legislation:- The terms of reference for the playing field committee have not been reviewed since 2020. It is recommended that a review of documents placed on the website show evidence of review within the financial year even if no changes are made.

Areas in the 2022-2023 AGAR Annual Internal Audit Report for which Yes or N/A cannot be ticked

	Reason
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	
H	
I	
J	Could not reconcile bank and savings account
K	
L	
M	
N	
O	

Yours sincerely,



LRALC
Internal Audit Service

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Internal Auditor to the Council
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The figures submitted in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2023	Year ending 31 March 2024
1. Balances brought forward	17316	20819
2. Annual precept	14000	15000
3. Total other receipts	11528	21084
4. Staff costs	2853	3420
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. Total other payments	19172	31360
7. Balances carried forward	20819	22123
8. Total cash and investments	20819	22123
9. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	45031	54174
10. Total borrowings	0	0