



BUSHLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Internal auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2024
Name of Auditor: Anita Sach

GAPTC internal audits comply with the proper practices outlined in the Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities – A Practitioners' Guide and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The GAPTC internal audit reviews and reports on whether the systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective. The audit tests a variety of documents, including agendas and minutes, policies, insurance and risk management processes, to ensure Council meets the requirements set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return. The internal audit does not involve the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of an authority in order to detect error or fraud.

Our auditors are independent of the Council and are competent to be able to carry out the requirements of the internal audit service.

NOTE The auditor will complete the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) page on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). The AIAR informs the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) assertions on the AGAR, so when council reviews the AGS, the responses must reflect the AIAR report.

1. Council working documents

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
1.1	Have Standing Orders been a) tailored to council?	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Recommend name of council is put on front page of policy	May minute 7

	b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
1.2	Have Financial Regulations been a) tailored to council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? (Objective B)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	May minute 9
1.3	Does the council a) give grants? b) have a grant-awarding policy?	a) None as of 31/1/24 b) Yes		July minute 10 Publications section on website
1.4	Have items/ services been competitively purchased in accordance with Financial and/or Procurement Regulations?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2 & 3	November minute 9 speed indicator device
1.5	Code of conduct reviewed in the last 2/3 years?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	May minute 8 Annual Reports section of website

2. Finance

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
2.1	Has the General Power of Competence been adopted (e.g. a minute reference), if Council qualifies?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
2.2	S137 a) is there a separate account for payments? b) are totals within statutory limits? (for Council's that do not held General Power of Competence)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1 & 3	S137 payment viewed on Scribe
2.3	Is there an annual council authorisation of Direct Debit list and Standing Orders? (Objective B)	Yes	Only one Direct Debit Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Approved May minute 18b; ratified September minute 6
2.4	Was Petty Cash expenditure approved, if any? (Objective F)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Not used
2.5	Is all expenditure supported by VAT invoices, if	Yes		Sampled payments from Scribe

	applicable? (Objective B)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
2.6	VAT – a) recorded in accounts b) reclaimed? (Objective B)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	b) October minute 5 – report submitted Amount received 10/11/23 – receipts list

3. Risk management

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
3.1	Insurance policy a) in place? b) cover reviewed to ensure still fit for purpose? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes but	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	May minute 16. Policy schedule viewed
3.2	Copy of Risk Management policy a) adopted? b) reviewed annually by Council? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) To be done	Policy adopted May 2023. Recommend that there is an annual review Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	May minute 14 Policy on website
3.3	Asset register a) reviewed regularly? (Objective H) b) published on	a) Yes b) Yes		October minute 11 23/24 asset register on website

	website? (Objective L)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	
3.4	Evidence that assets a) have been inspected for risk? b) reported in minutes? c) any actions undertaken? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) No c) Yes	Recommend that inspections of street furniture items on the asset register, eg seats, bus shelter, flagpole etc are reported to council and inspection dates inserted into Asset Register. This protects council in case of an insurance claim against it. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	May minute 15 noticeboard cleaned and plans to refurbish seats Clerk advises that inspections are happening but not minuted
3.5	Evidence that internal controls a) take place? b) are documented? c) minuted? as per Council's Financial Regulations/Standing Orders (Objective B)	a) Yes b) No c) No	Recommend that the minute notes that internal controls are taking place Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	Clerk advised that the councillor carrying out the bank reconciliation checks the figures entered into Scribe against the bank statements online
3.6	Bank reconciliations are on agenda to be considered by Council? (Objective I)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	April minute 5c – viewed at end of minutes October minute 5c – viewed at end of minutes Bank reconciliations appear on all minutes
3.7	Review of a) investments? b) bank mandates (signatories on bank accounts)? (Objective B/C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	May minutes 18a and 18c; January minutes 6d

3.8	If bank cards in use, are proper procedures in place? (Objective B)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
3.9	Are a) physical records secure? b) electronic records backed up?	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Lockable cabinets at village hall and Clerk's home Backups made to cloud

4. Budgetary controls

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
4.1	Was a budget properly for the year under review a) prepared? b) adopted? c) minuted? (Objective D)	a) Yes b) Yes but c) Yes	Budget should be used to identify the precept need, so recommend budget is adopted before the end of January Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	c) March 2023 minute 6
4.2	a) Were the earmarked objectives of the reserves identified in the budget, if any? b) Were the general reserves reasonable?	a) Yes b) None	JPAG recommends that councils should have general reserves of between 3- and 12- months' expenditure. For a small council this should be nearer 12 months. See ref 5.34 on page 38. This is important to ensure council has sufficient funds in case of unexpected expenditure, eg Clerk sickness, claim against the council.	a) small amount for Youth Fund b) No general reserves

	(Objective D)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
4.3	Was the precept demand for the year under review properly minuted in full council?	Yes	Precept amount included in the minutes	November 2022 minute 10
4.4	Did the council a) regularly compare budget vs spend (as detailed in the financial regulations) b) and evidenced in the minutes? (Objective D)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	July minute 7 October minute 10 Budget vs spend documents viewed for both meetings
4.5	Are any significant variances from budget reported?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	

5. Payroll

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
5.1	Do all staff have a contract of employment?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Contract viewed for 22/23 internal audit
5.2	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by Council? (Objective G)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	

5.3	Has Council a) registered as an employer with HMRC? b) have PAYE / NIC been properly dealt with (including year-end procedures)? (Objective G)	a) Yes b) Yes		Payments to HMRC on payments list 22/23 P60 viewed
5.4	Are Councillor's allowances and expenses properly authorised & controlled, if any?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
5.5	Pension provision – eligible employees a) offered pension scheme? b) outcome minuted?	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Outcome minuted March 23 minute 5c
5.6	Is Council a) registered with the Pension Regulator for auto-enrolment pensions? b) Has auto-enrolment registration with Pension Regulator been reviewed (required every 3 years)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Letter dated 24/11/22 viewed for 22/23 internal audit Next review November 2025

6. Year-end procedures

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
6.1	Are debtors and creditors recorded properly on separate balance sheet if using Income & Expenditure reporting? (Objective J)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Council uses Receipts and Payments
6.2	Does Council as a whole consider the year-end accounts in addition to 6.5? (Objective J)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	May minute 19
6.3	Minute confirming that council is eligible for Certificate of Exemption (only for councils with a turnover of less than £25,000) (Objective K)	Yes	Recommend that the following wording could be used in the minute: Council confirms that it is eligible to complete a Certificate of Exemption as income and expenditure do not exceed £25,000 Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	April minute 6d
6.4	Annual Governance	Yes		April minute 6b

	Statement, section 1 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 2 below)?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
6.5	Annual Statement of Accounts, section 2 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 1 above)?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	April minute 6c
6.6	Are all sections of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return published on the website? (Objective L/N)	Yes	Recommend that council has a separate Finance section on the website Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Annual Reports section on website
6.7	Did council correctly provide for the exercise of public rights? (Objective M)	Yes but	Recommend that the dates for the period of exercise of public rights are also reported to council and minuted. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 4	Annual Reports section on website
6.8	Previous internal audit report reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?	Yes but	Recommend that actions arising from the report are outlined and periodically updated to council Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7	April minute 6c – report noted. It is evident that some good work has gone on during the year to address issues identified.

6.9	Previous external audit report (for councils with turnover over £25,000) reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7	
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7. Other matters

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
7.1	Policies in place for compliance with GDPR, such as Data Protection Policy for Staff & Councillors and for the public?	Yes but	Recommend that policies are also adopted for councillors and the public. Templates can be provided by the CALC Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	May minute 10 Staff policy adopted November 2022
7.2	Is the Council a Managing Trustee?	No	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9	
7.3	Do trustees meet at least once a year and publish separate accounts? (Objective O)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9	
7.4	Website	Yes		Bottom of home page

	Accessibility Statement on website home page?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
7.5	Did council formally appoint GAPTIC as the Internal Auditor?	Yes	Council confirmed that the Internal Auditor is competent and independent of Council when appointing them Annual Governance Statement Assertion 6	November minute 7
7.6	Are registers up to date for council-owned burial grounds (if any) and purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burials certificate completed?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	

8. Procedures

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments	Evidence
8.1	Minutes: a) DPIs or other interests recorded? b) published on website in draft form within one month (mandatory for councillors with a turnover of less	a) Yes b) Sometimes c) Yes	Recommend that the draft minutes are put on the website as soon as available, so that members of the public are able to view them before the next meeting.	a) Declarations of interest appear on all agendas b) 23 Jan minutes not on website as at 20 Feb (date of meeting) but go up on 21 Feb. Clerk advised that they are put on the website within one month, but after approval by council, unless the meeting takes place more than one month after the previous meeting. c) July and October signed minutes viewed on

	than £25,000)? (Objective L) c) initialled on each page and final page signed?			website
			Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
8.2	List of members' a) responsibilities (Objective L) and b) interests held and published on the website?	a) Yes b) Mainly	Could place the councillors' registers and responsibilities in a more prominent position Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Councillors' responsibilities in Annual Reports section on website Link to Registers of Interests forms on MHDC website Note that there is no register for Cllr Vaughan Latter on the MHDC website
8.3	Agendas signed and displayed on website 3 clear days' prior to meeting? (Objective L)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Agendas on website 20.2.24 agenda on website 15.2.24
8.4	Summons issued in proper format?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Agendas on website