

Ashmanhaugh Parish Council

Internal Audit Report

For Ashmanhaugh Parish Council

Financial Year 2016/17

Including Explanatory Notes for Annual Return
(where a 'no' has been marked)

Prepared by Catherine Moore
23rd April 2017

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I have completed an internal audit of the accounts for Ashmanhaugh Council for the year ending 31 March 2017. My findings are detailed below using the tests provided in the Governance and Accountability (England) 2016.

Internal Control	Test	Observations / Recommendations
Proper bookkeeping	Is the cash book maintained and up to date?	Yes
	Is the cash book arithmetically correct?	Yes
	Is the cash book regularly balanced?	Yes
Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and Payment Controls	Has the Council formally adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations?	Yes
	Date Standing Orders last reviewed	1 st March 2016
	Date Financial Regulations last reviewed	March 2017
	Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specific duties?	Yes
	Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased?	N/a
	Are payments in the cash book supported by purchase orders, invoices, authorised and minuted?	Yes, except one cheque made to Preston Rooms – no invoice.
	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Yes
	Is S137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?	Yes
	Have S137 payments been approved and included in the minutes as such?	Yes
Risk Management Arrangements	Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity?	No
	Do minutes record the Council carrying out an annual risk assessment or review of their risk management scheme?	Yes
	Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	Yes

Internal Control	Test	Observations / Recommendations
	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	Yes
Budgetary Controls	Has the Council prepared an annual budget in support its precept and has this been minuted as being approved?	Yes
	Has the precept been calculated from the budget and been approved?	Yes
	Does the budget include an actual completed year?	Yes
	Is actual expenditure against budget regularly reported to the Council?	Yes
	Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	No
Income Controls	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Yes – although 1 ‘donation’ with no supporting paperwork – understood to be from the Round Table for the newsletter.
	Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority’s notification?	Yes
	Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective?	Yes
Petty Cash Procedures	Is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices / receipts?	N/a
	Is petty cash expenditure reported to each Council meeting?	N/a
	Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?	N/a
Payroll Controls	Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions?	Yes
	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the Council?	Yes
	Are salaries above the National Living Wage / Minimum Wage?	Yes

Internal Control	Test	Observations / Recommendations
	Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the Council?	Yes
	Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the Council as an employer?	The PAYE records show a tax liability of £18.20, and it is understood that this is being queried with HMRC. The salary runs have not had the tax due dedicated from the gross payment, therefore the Clerk will need to agree with HMRC what the 2016/17 liabilities are, and adjust a future pay period accordingly. At the time of audit £18.20 was due to HMRC and the Clerk has been advised to adjust her tax codes in her various employments to ensure that future tax calculations are correct.
Asset Controls	Does the Council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care?	Yes
	Are the assets and investments registers up to date? When were these last reviewed?	Yes – last review 01/12/2016
	Does the asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?	Yes
Bank Reconciliation	Is there a bank reconciliation for each account and is this reported to Council?	Yes
	Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion?	Yes
	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	No
Year-End Procedures	Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis? (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)	Yes – R&P
	Do accounts agree with the cash book?	Yes

Internal Control	Test	Observations / Recommendations
	Has a year-end bank reconciliation been undertaken?	Yes
	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	Yes
	Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?	N/a
Procedural	Is eligibility for the General Power of Competence properly evidenced?	The Council has not adopted the General Power of Competence.
	Have points raised on the last Internal Audit report been considered by Council and actioned?	Yes
Transparency: For smaller councils with turnover under £25,000	Are minutes for the whole year on the website?	Yes – although some are still marked as draft. The final minutes should be published shortly after the meeting.
	Are agendas for the whole year on the website?	Yes
	Are payments over £100 detailed on the website?	Yes
	Have electors' rights been advertised on the website?	Yes
	Are councillors' responsibilities detailed on the website?	Yes
	Is the last financial year's Annual Return on the website?	No – draft Return has been published, but the final signed return has not.
	Are the land and building asset details on the website?	N/a
Councils that are Burial Authorities	Are fees levied in accordance with the Council's approved scale of fees and charges?	N/a
	Have fees for the cemetery been reviewed and agreed by the Council?	N/a
	Were comparisons made with other cemeteries prior to setting the fees?	N/a

Internal Control	Test	Observations / Recommendations
	Have burial books been kept up to date and are they safely stored?	N/a
Councils with Allotments	Has a list of allotment holders with amounts paid to Council been submitted?	N/a
	Have fees for the allotments been reviewed and agreed by Council?	N/a
Councils with Charities	Have Charities reported and accounted separately?	N/a
	Have Charity accounts been independently audited?	N/a
	Have the Charity accounts and Annual Return been filed within the legal time limit?	N/a

Summary of Recommendations:

- Please ensure that minutes in their final format are published on the website after they have been approved.
- The draft Annual Return has been published but the final one signed by the external auditor has not – this must be published on the website by 30th September each year.

I would like to congratulate the Clerk on well presented and accurate accounts and paperwork for the audit – thank you.

Signed:.....

Date: