

Nuffield Parish Council Internal Controls

Scope of Responsibility

Nuffield Parish Council (the Council) is a local authority funded by public money and is responsible for ensuring its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In meeting this responsibility assurance is required that there is a sound system of internal control and that the Council's accountability framework is 'risk' based; proportionate to that risk and to the amounts of public money involved and to the stakeholders' need for assurance.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control.

The system of internal control is designed to ensure that risks are managed to a reasonable and acceptable level forming part of an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the authority's policies, aims and objectives and to evaluate and manage those risks accordingly.

The Internal Control Environment

The Council:

- appoints a Chairman to be responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful with the clerk's advice.
- reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its January meeting. This meeting also approves the level of precept for the following financial year.
- meets 6 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives.

The Council Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer:

- is appointed by the Council to act as the Council's advisor and administrator
- is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the council's finances
- is responsible for the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks
- ensures that the council's procedures, control system and policies are adhered to.
- the clerk has a contract of employment with clear terms and conditions.
- Salary paid to agree with that approved by the Council.
- PAYE is being properly operated by the Council via their payroll company C&M Accounts Ltd Wyvol Court Basingstoke Road Swallowfield RG7 1WY

Payments:

- are reported to the Council for approval
- are made by cheque and signed by 2 authorised signatures (who also sign the relevant the counterfoil)

Income

- is banked in the Council's name in a timely manner and reported to the Council
- assessments are carried out in respect of actions, systems and controls are regularly reviewed.

Risk Assessments (Risk Management)

The Internal Audit

- is carried out by an independent Internal Auditor who reports to the Council on the adequacy of its records, procedures, systems, internal controls, regulations and risk management reviews.

Standing Orders

- the Council has adopted the Model Standing Orders as recommended by N.A.L.C.

Financial Orders

- the Council has adopted and reviews updates as necessary each year.

VAT

- VAT payments are identified, recorded and reclaimed.

Petty Cash

- all petty cash expenditure is recorded, supported by receipts and reimbursed at regular intervals to the clerk or pays for these items and claims back with invoices

Asset Register

- the Council maintains a register of all material assets owned or in its care. The Clerk to update as and when necessary and to be approved annually.

Insurance

- The Council's insurance provision is reviewed annually both in relation to its schedule of cover and also its value for money.

Code of Conduct

- Each member must sign Acceptance of the Code and complete a Register of Interest form. Members to consider every item on the agenda and ensure that any interest is declared at the beginning of the meeting or before the matter is discussed.