

Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council – Internal Note

Source; Clerk / Assistant Clerk

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STATEMENT OF REVIEW OF CONTROL AND AUDIT PROCEDURES

It is a requirement of The Accounts & Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 that local councils once a year review the internal audit procedures and minute accordingly. This document sets out the main criteria and the local actions taken to provide assurance in the procedures.

Internal Audit

Current Auditor: Heelis & Lodge who are independent of any financial control and management of the Parish Council.

Independence & Competency: The Audit Commission expects the function of Internal Auditor to be undertaken by a competent person who does not have any direct involvement in the Council's financial affairs, similar to that of an Independent Examiner appointed by a charity. (see paragraph 45 of 'A new approach to Local Council Audit', produced and published by the Audit Commission).

Both of the partners in Heelis & Lodge are Local Authority Financial Officers and qualified to Diploma level in Local Policy and are considered by both the Audit Commission and the Charity commission, to fulfil the criteria relating to independence and competency tests, to act as Independent Internal auditors to Town and Parish councils.

Heather Heelis who personally carries out our internal audit has many years' experience in all aspects of local government at both District and Parish level. She understands the role of the internal auditor by regularly reviewing and reporting on the councils control systems and risk management in addition to financial audit trails. She has good knowledge of the legal framework under which councils operate and is also familiar with the work of Suffolk Association for Local Councils (SALC) and has been recommended by them as an internal auditor.

Level of Internal Audit: An internal audit is currently carried out once a year and is considered fit for purpose and in proportion to the needs, size and circumstances of this council, which keeps procedures in place to monitor its activities. Examination of the councils minutes reveals that procedures and legislation are regularly and routinely reviewed/updated for accuracy, suitability and legality. They are deemed fit for purpose.

Internal Control and Testing

In addition to the day-to-day procedures carried out by the Clerk/RFO & Assistant Clerk, the Chairman undertakes spot checks of bank statements against cash book and cash book against Excel accounts spreadsheet.

Checks are also made by the Chairman against cash book with the operation of the Cemetery Account and the role of the Registrar of Burials.

Scope of Internal Audit work for Parish and Town Councils

Checking on and reporting to the Council on the adequacy of systems of control. Making recommendations where required.

Proper book-keeping: Receipts and payments books or computer records, regular reconciliation of books and bank statements. Supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts

Financial regulations:	Standing Orders and Financial Standing Orders Tenders Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes Identifying VAT payments and reclamation Cheque books, paying in books and other relevant documents
Risk Assessment:	Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council
Budgetary controls:	Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and supporting documents
Income controls:	Precept and other income (where applicable), including credit control mechanisms
Petty Cash:	The Parish Council does not operate a Petty Cash system – all local payments made by cheque against invoice or till receipt
Payroll controls:	PAYE and NIC in place where necessary. Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures Records relating to contracts of employment
Asset control:	Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets Cross checking on insurance cover and deeds (where applicable)
Bank Reconciliation:	Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements
Year-end procedures:	Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents Verifying sample payments and income Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate.

The Review

The Review of effectiveness of Internal Audit Plan Risk Assessment Document (attached) is to be used in conjunction with this document when reviewing the effectiveness of the internal audit each year. It should be noted in the minutes that this has been completed.

<i>Doc. History:</i>	Issue 1	dated	13 th December 2007
	Issue 2	dated	12 th May 2011
	Issue 3	dated	10 th May 2012
	Issue 4	dated	10 th May 2018