

BRAMFORD

PARISH COUNCIL



Bramford Parish Council, The Parish Room, Ship Lane, Bramford, Suffolk, IP8 4AN
Tel: 01473 747433 e-mail: bramfordparishcouncil@btinternet.com - Clerk : Jane Every

BRAMFORD PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2023

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Bramford Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its December meeting. The January meeting of the council approves the level of precept for the following financial year.

A Councillor is appointed to have responsibility for bank reconciliation checks. The full council meets 12 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the Parish clerk.

The council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures. See attached Report.

Clerk to the Council/Responsible Finance Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the

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Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments:

All payments are reported to the council for approval. Two members of the council must sign every cheque and authorise the on-line payments. The Chair of the council authorises the order for payment. The signatories should consider each payment against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil. All authorised cheque signatories are members of the Council. No officer of the Council can sign cheques. Where delegation permits, as per s.101(1)(a) of the Local Government Act of 1972 and the Council's Financial Regulations, a report will be provided to the next full Council.

Income:

All income is received and banked in the council's name in a timely manner and reported to the council.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management:

The council reviews its risk assessment annually and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Internal Audit:

The council appoints an independent and competent internal auditor who reports to the council on annual basis on the adequacy of it's:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management


External Audit:

The council's external auditors, submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

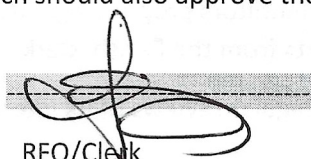
4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The results of that review must be considered by the Council, which should also approve the Statement of Internal Control.

Chairman



RFO/Clerk



Approved and adopted by Bramford Parish Council : Meeting Date : 17th April 2023.

BRAMFORD PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 aims to strengthen governance and accountability through requirements related to internal control and internal audit.

Whilst the Parish Council has reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit (independence, competence, proportionate and scope), it has a requirement levied on it to ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control: -

'The regulations require active participation by members in providing positive assurance to the electors of their stewardship of public money. The framework of accountability is risk-based i.e. level of control and management must be appropriate to the risk involved. The Council must determine the most appropriate method of internal control and care should be taken to ensure that internal control tests are proportionate and relevant and that they are neither seen as, nor intended as, undue interference in the RFO's day to day management of financial affairs.'

As part of its internal control, the Parish Council has appointed a non-signatory Councillor to conduct a review of the system of internal control via the following tests on a annual basis with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council and minuted as received.

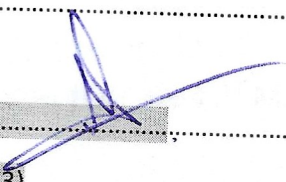
CONTROL TEST	DONE	COMMENTS -check documents and initial
Ensuring an up to date Register of Assets		Will be included in annual mtg 15.05.23
Regular maintenance arrangement for Physical assets		Annual
Annual review of risk and the adequacy of insurance cover		See Policy RKL176640/PC/00015, dated 01.06.22 renewal due 01.06.23
Annual review of financial risk		Financial Risk Assessment , on Agenda in Meeting 17.04.23
Awareness of Standing Orders and Financial regulations		Standing Orders and Financial Regulations reviewed on Agenda - Annual Mtg 15.05.23
Adoption of Financial and Standing Orders		Will be reviewed at annual mtg 15.05.23
Annual review of contracts where appropriate)		
Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed		Monthly minuted, and approved
Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure		Spot checks carried out for review on financials including Cash Book including Bank Statements, and paying in books.
Recording in the minutes or appendices of the minutes the precise powers under which expenditure is being approved.		Included in financial section of minutes

Payments supported by invoices, authorised and minuted		Spot checks carried out.
Regular scrutiny of income records to ensure income is correctly received, recorded and banked		As above.
Scrutiny to ensure precept recorded in the cashbook agrees to District Council notification		Review and checks of bank rec, and cash book.
Contracts of employment for staff Contract annually reviewed		HR Committee responsibility, and minuted
Updating records to record changes in relevant legislation		Referencing from NALC and SALC updates.
PAYE/NIC properly operated by the Council as an employer		Outsourced with SALC
VAT correctly accounted for VAT payments identified, recorded and reclaimed in the cashbook		VAT records reclaim as per accounting rules, no historic records or gateway access, reclaim calculated for period 20/21/processed online, await refund.
Regular financial reporting to Parish Council		Monthly Agenda item, with approvals minuted.
Regular budget monitoring statements as reported to Parish Council		Quarterly agenda item, minuted.
Compliance with DCLG Guide Open & Accountable Local Government 2014		Followed as legislated.
Compliance with Local Transparency Code Of 2014: Items of expenditure incurred over £500		Reviewed and followed.
<p>Verifying that the Council is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements</p> <p>Are the following in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit / Impact Assessment • Privacy Notices • Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests • Procedure for dealing with Data breaches • Data Retention & Disposal Policies <p>Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept in for safekeeping</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit carried annually • Privacy notices - Carried as appropriate • SAR provided under a Disciplinary matter • No data breaches occurred, processes in place. • Data Retention and disposal not undertaken historically, process to action ongoing. <p>Correct, hardcopy and digital stored.</p>

Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' Interests and Gifts of Hospitality		As minuted.
Adoption of Codes of Conduct for Members		To be reviewed on at annual Mtg 15.05.23
Declaration of Acceptance of Office		To be reviewed at Annual Meeting 15.05.23

Date of review of system of Internal Control

Review of system of Internal Controls carried out by:

Name... Simon Coulson..... Signature..... 

Report submitted to Council (date) 18th April 2023)

(minute reference) HA April 2023 Item 13.5 (page

Next review of system of Internal Controls due... April 2024.....