

Freethorpe Parish Council

Internal Audit Report
Financial Year 2024/25

Prepared by Sonya Blythe
4 April 2025

I have completed an internal audit of the accounts for Freethorpe Parish Council for the year ending March 2025.

My findings are detailed below using the tests provided in the Governance and Accountability (England) guidance.

Internal control	Test	Observations
Proper bookkeeping	Is the cashbook maintained and up to date?	Yes
	Is the cashbook arithmetically correct?	Yes
	Is the cashbook 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	May 24 minutes
	Date Financial Regulations last reviewed	May 24 minutes
	Has a Responsible finance officer been appointed with specific duties?	Clerk is RFO
	Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?	Yes, trail from invoice to minutes and bank accounts
	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Separate column in cashbook, claim received August 24
	Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?	N/A
	Have S137 payments been approved and included in the minutes as such?	N/A
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, April 24 minutes
	Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	Fidelity and liability cover in place
	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	Yes, March 25

Internal control	Test	Observations
Budgetary controls	Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept and has this been minuted as being approved?	2425 – Jan 24 minutes 2526 – Nov 24 minutes
	Has the precept been calculated from the budget and been approved?	24/25 – recorded as £17,314. 2526 – recorded as £17931
	Does the budget include an actual completed year?	Yes
	Is actual expenditure against budget regularly reported to the council?	Yes, quarterly repots made
	Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	No
Income controls	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Yes, all received by BACS
	Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification?	Statement £17314 Remittance £17314
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, contract seen
	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?	Yes
	Are salaries above the National Living Wage/Minimum Wage?	Yes National pay award implemented November (paid March)
	Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council?	Yes
	Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the council as an employer?	Yes, HMRC accounted for on payslips and payment taken by DD

Internal control	Test	Observations
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, Feb 25 minutes
	Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?	Yes, schedule seen
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, reported each meeting
	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	No
	Is the value of investments held summarised on the reconciliation?	N/A
Year-end procedures	Are year-end accounts prepared using the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)?	Yes, R&P
	Do accounts agree with the cash book?	Yes AGAR – £31888 Statements - £32138.73 (£250 uncashed cheque)
	Has a year-end bank reconciliation been undertaken?	Reconciliation - (£32,138.73 uncashed cheque) £31,888.73
	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	Yes, cashbook matched to bank statement
	Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?	N/A
Procedural	Is eligibility for the General Power of Competence properly evidenced?	Yes
	Have points raised on the last Internal Audit report been considered by council and actioned?	Remove S137 column from cashbook. Complete. Policies – when reviewing policies annually, do not list en-masse. Complete.

Internal control	Test	Observations
		Payroll – set up standing order to meet contractual obligation. Complete.
Transparency: For smaller councils with turnover under £25,000	Minutes for whole year on website?	Yes
	Agendas for whole year on website?	Yes
	Payments over £100 detailed on website?	Yes
	Electors' rights advertised on website?	Yes
	Councillors' responsibilities detailed on website?	Yes
	Last financial year's AGAR on website?	Yes
	Land and building assets details on website? (Description, location, owner/leaseholder, date and cost of acquisition and present use)	Yes, asset list uploaded
Burial Authorities only	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 Council?	N/A
	Were comparisons made with other cemeteries prior to setting the fees?	N/A
	Have burial books been kept up to date and are they safely stored?	N/A
Allotments only	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 only	Have Charities reported and accounted separately?	N/A

Internal control	Test	Observations
	Have the Charity accounts been independently audited?	N/A
	Have the Charity accounts and Annual Return been filed within the legal time limit?	N/A
ICO	Is Council registered with the Information Commissioners Office?	Yes, June bank statement
General Data Protection Regulations	Has the Council adopted a Data Protection Policy?	Yes
	Has the Council put in place Privacy Notices?	Yes
Other		N/A

Thank you to Andrew for supplying everything so promptly.

- I have checked through your accounts and confirmed them against income and expenditure receipts, as well as against payments in your cashbook. Bank reconciliations are regularly carried out for the accounts.
- I have confirmed that your Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are up to date.
- I have noted that your VAT has been claimed within the past year.
- I have verified that your insurance is adequate.
- I confirm that your payroll management meets requirements
- I have reviewed your budget setting process and noted that you provide Council with regular spend against budget information
- I have reviewed the AGAR against your year-end bank reconciliations and your accounts

I have no concerns to raise and as such have signed the internal audit section of the AGAR.

Notes / recommendations for 25/26:

None.

Sonya Blythe

Internal auditor