

Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Name of council:	BOTTESFORD PARISH COUNCIL		
Name of Internal Auditor:	Catherine Camp	Date of report:	12.04.24
Year ending:	31 March 2024	Date audit carried out:	12.04.24

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. Managing the council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and management and not left for internal audit. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The proper practices referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations are set out in JPAG Practitioners Guide. It is a guide to the accounting practices to be followed by local councils and it sets out the appropriate standard of financial reporting to be followed.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

I carried out an Internal Audit of Bottesford Parish Council on 12th April 2024 mainly by an examination of the information provided on the parish website. I found the website easy to navigate, and documentation allowed a transparent view of the council's business. My thanks to the Parish Clerk/RFO, Lucy Flavin, for providing additional information on request and for being available to discuss matters via a video zoom call.

I examined Bookkeeping, Due Process, Risk Management, Bank Reconciliations, Budgeting, Internal Control and performed a detailed scan of the minutes via the Website. I also sought evidence that the previous Audit recommendations had been actioned, which they had.

Committee members need to remember that a committee must re-appointed a Chairman on an annual basis, and record the appointment in the minutes (even if the same person continues in the chair).

Although there is a system of Internal control in place, the Clerk inputs all data for online payments and then, following council approval, also authorises the payments. I suggested that a banking system that allowed someone other than the clerk to authorise the payments would add an extra level of security for the Clerk and mean that an extra pair of eyes could double check the figures.

This Council is very well organised, and the Councillors are actively engaged in working on behalf of their community. I would especially like to commend the Clerk on the excellent document explaining "lead roles" which has enabled Councillors to take active roles to aid the Council work whilst clearly understanding that decisions need to be made by the corporate body – well done!

Have comments from the internal audit 2022-2023 been addressed?

Recommendation 2022-2023	Comment
To list money received and bank reconciliation figures within the body of the Minutes to improve clarity of financial reporting.	Clarity of Financial Reporting has been improved.

Areas in the 2023-2024 AGAR Annual Internal Audit Report for which Yes or N/A cannot be ticked

	Reason
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	Not Covered as the Council does not hold Petty Cash
G	
H	
I	
J	
K	N/A as this council does not meet the criteria for exemption
L	
M	
N	
O	

Recommendations for action 2023-2024

Areas for consideration or improvement	Recommendation
Ensure that Committees re-elect their Chair on an annual basis. Ensure Committee Agendas are signed and dated to ensure that 3 clear days notice is given of a meeting.	Committee members need to be aware that the rules that are applied to Parish Council meetings in terms of notice of meetings and appointment of Chair etc also apply to any committee of the Parish Council.
Review Banks to find a system which allows the Clerk to have Viewing and Administration access and Councillors viewing and Authorisation access	This system mimics a Clerk writing out cheques but Councillors being required to sign them, thus giving an added level of financial security.

Yours sincerely,



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The figures submitted in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2023	Year ending 31 March 2024
1. Balances brought forward	148,663	168,544
2. Annual precept	126,500	133,500
3. Total other receipts	20,103	48,763
4. Staff costs	35,150	38,121
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. Total other payments	91,572	108,589
7. Balances carried forward	168,544	204,097
8. Total cash and investments	168,544	204,097
9. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	439,846	454,577
10. Total borrowings	0	0