

WELNEY PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Internal Audit Report
(as required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972)
Financial Year 2021/22

I have in the (virtual) presence of Mrs Melanie Hilton (Parish Clerk) inspected the parish council documents as appropriate, and in line with, the scope of the interim audit requested. Melanie also acts as the Responsible Finance Officer for the council. Mrs Dorothy Harvey is presently Chairperson of the Council. I would like to thank the Parish Clerk for providing me with all the information required to carry out the audit.

Welney Parish Council is responsible for such assets as a bus shelter with a seat, the Welney Village Sign and streetlight maintenance within the village.

Several recommendations were made by the previous auditor. I am informed these have been complied with.

Welney Parish Council has calculated and agreed an annual precept of £16,553 (the Council's meeting of 7th December 2020 refers). There are no significant unexplained variances in the budget.

The clerk's salary is paid in accordance with members approval and statutory guidance, and documented in the relevant minutes. PAYE and NIC have been properly operated (all relevant records being submitted for inspection). Income & Expenditure is used as the basis for accounting. Levels of insurance cover are regularly reviewed. No petty cash is held.

The council has recently set up a new website and I consider this to be of a very good standard, containing lots of useful information, council policies etc and is regularly updated with minutes and agendas of meetings.

Standing Orders were last reviewed in March 2021 and Financial Regulations in October 2021 and are regularly reviewed. Good practise suggests that standing orders and financial regulations should be reviewed every two or three years and Risk Management policy annually (and the council has a Core Document Review document in place to ensure this takes place). Financial record keeping is a good standard and readily accessible to members and the public (via the Council's website). The bank is reconciled on a monthly basis with regular financial reporting to members. I have inspected the Assets Register and have found this to be in order. It was updated in January 2022. Governance procedures have shown significant improvements since the arrival of the present Parish Clerk and are now far more robust.

I note that a contingency for “General Reserves” will be made for the next financial year. The level is for councillors to determine but many councils aim to hold between 50% and 100% of the amount of the last precept.

I would make no formal recommendations to members as I believe that governance procedures and accountancy records for this council are now of a good standard. A new Clerk is in place who is clearly working hard to achieve this.

In conclusion, I am satisfied that this parish council is functioning well and is fully discharging its legal and statutory responsibilities.

In accordance with the above I have duly signed and completed Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22. I commend this report to Council members.

ROBIN GOREHAM

(Internal Auditor)

April 2022