Year End Audit Report

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Bagby & Balk Parish Council

Period Audited: April 2023-March 2024
YEAR 24/25

Objective (Automated)	QUESTIONS	Answer	Recommendations
Proper Bookkeeping	What systems are used - ieScribe/Rialtas/Edge/Excel/Quickbooks etc	Excel Spreadsheets	
Proper Bookkeeping	Is cashbook maintained and up to date?	Yes	
Proper Bookkeeping	Is cashbook arithmetically correct?	Yes	
Proper Bookkeeping	Is the cashbook regularly balanced?	Yes- Balanced	
Proper Bookkeeping	What basis are the accounts made up on - cash or accruals?	Receipts & Payments basis	
A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Has the council formally adopted standing orders and financial regulations?	Yes- Adopted at the Annual meeting in May 2024.	
A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Has a Responsible financial officer been appointed with specific duties?	Yes- Specific duties detailed in contract of employment.	
A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased?	Yes- Where the value is below £3,000 and above £500 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates	
A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?	Yes- 20 samples checked against invoices, bank statements and Minutes.	

A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Yes. Council are not VAT registered, VAT126 form submitted annually.		
A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Does the Council have General Power of Competence?	No.		
A) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; AND B) Payment Controls	Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?	Yes. No S137 payments granted in this financial year. Grant policy in place & monitoring forms.		
Risk Management Arrangements	Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity?	Minutes checked, no unusual activity reported.		
Risk Management Arrangements	Do minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment?	Yes. This is reviewed annually.		
Risk Management Arrangements	Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	Yes, insurance cover checked against the asset register and appropriate cover is in place.		
Risk Management Arrangements	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	Review annually. Recommend that the Council look to implement a quarterly checklist for internal controls that can be signed off.		
Risk Management Arrangements	(Burial Authorities only) Is the Council aware of the Ministry of Justice guidance on "Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials"	Not applicable.		
Burial Authority	Has a sample of burials and intermments been tested and the relevant paperwork and payments found to be in place?	Not applicable.		
Budgetary Controls	Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?	Budget Setting Process: Each November, the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) prepares a draft budget for councillors' review. Councillors then assess the budget report, draft budget, and precept requirements before formally setting the budget for the forthcoming financial year.		
Budgetary Controls	Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council?	Yes, actual expenditure against the budget is reported to the council on a monthly basis.		
Budgetary Controls	Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	All variances explained- Precept raised and grant funding received to set up new allotments.		
Income Controls	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Yes.		
Income Controls	Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification?	Yes.		
Income Controls	Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective?	Yes.		
Petty Cash Procedures	Is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts?	No Petty Cash held.		
Petty Cash Procedures	Is petty cash expenditure reported to each council meeting?	Not applicable.		
Petty Cash Procedures	Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?	Not applicable.		

Payroll Controls	Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions?	Yes, NJC contracts in place detailing clear job description and terms/conditions.	
Payroll Controls	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?	Yes.	
Payroll Controls	Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council?	Yes.	
Payroll Controls	Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the council as an employer?	Yes.	
Asset Control	Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care?	Yes, asset register in place and this is updated regularly.	
Asset Control	Are the assets and Investments registers up to date?	Yes.	
Asset Control	Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?	Yes.	
Bank Reconciliation	Is there a bank reconciliation for each account?	Bank reconciliation statements are reviewed against the bank statements on a regular basis and have been verified as accurate.	
Bank Reconciliation	Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion?	Yes, monthly reconciliations in place.	
Bank Reconciliation	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	No.	
Bank Reconciliation	Is the value of investments held summarised on the reconciliation?	0	
Year End Procedures	Are year end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)?	Yes.	
Year End Procedures	Do accounts agree with the cashbook?	Yes,	
Year End Procedures	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	A comprehensive and robust audit trail is in place, verified against a sample of 20 records.	
Year End Procedures	Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?	A debtors list is maintained, and outstanding debts are actively monitored and followed up as necessary.	
Market Authority	Is the Council are Market Authority and if so please provide a list of regular market traders so we can check their contracts & a rate card for contracted and casual traders	No.	
Facilities	Do you manage any facilities, what systems do you use to record bookings and payments?	There are no community buildings; however, the parish has allotments with tenants. Tenancy agreements are in place, clearly outlining the rental terms. Payments are made as required and have been verified against the established rates.	
Other Issues	Is the Council registered with the Information Commissioner? If so what is the Reference Number and what is the date of expiry	Yes. Registration reference: ZA277999	
Other Issues	What arrangements does the Council have for the back up of computer files?	Backup files are stored on a memory stick with monthly updates and additionally saved in Google Drive for secure cloud storage.	
Other Issues	Does the Council have responsibility for any Trust Funds or Charities? If so, are they independently examined?	No.	
Other Issues	Record of Minutes	All minutes are consistent with the corresponding agendas and are publicly accessible on the website. Draft minutes are published promptly to ensure timely availability.	
Other Issues	Do the Council have a .gov.uk domain and dedicated email addresses for Council business?	The council is currently considering this; however, unless it becomes a legal requirement, the associated costs may outweigh the potential benefits.	

Other Issues	Internal Audit report published by 1st July on the website?	Yes.	
	Payments made in accordance with financial regulations, cheques, online banking, BACS, DD, credit or debit cards, other payments	Yes.	
Other Issues	S137 Grants- Do Grant Recipients fill in a report after given?	Yes.	
Other Issues	(during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	Yes.	
0	Are all the councils policies available to view on the PC Website?	Yes.	
0	Transparency Code- Are all payments over £100 detailed?	A dedicated section on the website clearly displays payment information, with all payments also recorded in the Minutes for transparency.	
Recommendations:			
	Website		*Consider a .gov.uk domain for enhanced security and accessibility.*
	Agendas		*Ensure the public forum is held at the beginning of meetings rather than within the session. The Public forum should be before the meeting starts or it is resolved to close the meeting for the forum & then X resolved to open it again to continue with the meeting.*
	Financial Reporting		*Publish bank balance reporting within council minutes for added financial oversight.*
	Contact details		*Suggest dedicated cllr email addresses are added to the website under contact details.*
	Internal Controls		*Review annually, recommend a quarterly checklist to be signed by the council.*
Conclusion		*Bagby & Balk Parish Council operates fully within statutory requirements, demonstrating strong financial management and governance. To further enhance transparency and accessibility, the council may consider adopting a .gov.uk domain, adjusting the timing of public forums, and incorporating bank balance reporting into council Minutes.*	