

HEELIS&LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

Internal Audit Report for Holbrook Parish Council – 2024/2025

The following Internal Audit was carried out on the adequacy of systems of control in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 and the guidance and instruction in the Practitioners Guide 2024. The following recommendations/comments have been made:

Income: £58,475.44 Expenditure: £55,065.63 Ear Reserves: £46,978.00 General: £28,383.37

AGAR 2024 / 2025 Completion:

Section One: Yes - unsigned

Section Two: Yes - unsigned

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024 / 2025: Yes

Certificate of Exemption: No

Proper book-keeping Cash Book, regular reconciliation of books and bank statements. Supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts

VAT payments are tracked and identified within the year end accounts. The Council hold the General Power of Competence and LGAs137 does not apply. The cashbook is referenced providing a clear audit trail. Supporting paperwork is in place and well referenced.

Financial regulations Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
Tenders
Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes
Identifying VAT payments and reclamation
Cheque books, paying in books and other relevant documents

Standing Orders in place: Yes
Reviewed: 20th May 2024 (Ref: 11.02)
Financial Regulations in place: Yes
Reviewed: 17th June 2024 (Ref: 6.01) & 20th January 2025 (Ref: 6.01)

VAT reclaimed during the year: Yes Registered: No

General Power of Competence: No Adopted: 15th May 2023 (Ref: 09)

Policy Review Schedule in place: Yes

There were no tenders during the year that exceeded the £30,000 Public Contract Regulations threshold.

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Risk Assessment

Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council
Compliance with Data Protection regulations

Risk Assessment document in place: Yes

Data Protection registration: Yes – ZA257900 Expiry 25/06/2025

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulations have changed and the new Regulations came into force on 25 May 2018. It is likely that this will affect the way in which the Council handles its data. Due to the financial risk associated with the General Data Protection Regulations, the Council have included this in their Risk Assessment.

Privacy Policy published: Yes

Insurance was in place for the year of audit. The Risk Assessment was reviewed at a meeting held on 20th January 2025 (Ref: 6.01).

Statement of Internal Controls in place: Yes

The Council have good internal financial controls in place. The Clerk provides financial reports to council meetings. Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.

Fidelity Cover: £100,000

The level of Fidelity cover is within the recommended guidelines of year-end balances plus 50% of the precept.

Transparency

Under the **Transparency code for smaller authorities**, smaller councils with income/expenditure under £25,000 should publish on their website from 1 April 2015:

Smaller Council: [No](#)

Website: www.holbrookparishcouncil.gov.uk

The Council is not subject to the requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller Councils.

Under **The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 13(1a&b)** councils must publish on their website:

Statement of Accounts, External Audit report and Annual Governance statement.

2024 Annual Return, Section One Published – Yes

2024 Annual Return, Section Two Published – Yes

2024 Annual Return, Section Three Published – Yes

Under the requirements of the **Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 13(2b)** a council is required to display AGAR's for the five years 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 on their website. The council has complied with this requirement.

Under **The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 15(2b)** councils must publish on their website:

Notice of period for the exercise of public rights

Published – Yes

Period of Exercise of Public Rights

Publication Date: 24/05/24 Start Date: 03/06/24 End Date: 12/07/24

Budgetary controls

Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and supporting documents

Precept: £???? (2024 / 2025) Date: 18th December 2023 (Ref: 7.02)

Precept: £37,500 (2025 / 2026) Date: 16th December 2024 (Ref: 7.03)

Good budgetary procedures are in place. The precept was agreed in full council, the precept decision was minuted but not the amount. The Clerk ensures the council are aware of responsibilities, commitments, forward planning and the need for adequate reserves. Budget papers are prepared to ensure councillors have sufficient information to make informed decisions. Budgets are monitored during the year.

Income controls	Precept and other income, including credit control mechanisms <i>All were found to be in order. Income controls were checked and income received and banked cross-referenced with the Cash Book and bank statements.</i>						
Petty Cash	Associated books and established system in place <i>A satisfactory expenses system is in place with supporting paperwork. No Petty Cash held.</i>						
Payroll controls	PAYE and NIC in place where necessary. Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures Records relating to contracts of employment PAYE System in place: Yes – SALC Payroll Services Employer PAYE Reference: 120/JA56350 P60's issued: Yes <i>The Council continue to operate RTI in accordance with HMRC regulations. Payroll is outsourced. All supporting paperwork is in place and P60's and a P45 have been produced as part of the year-end process.</i>						
	<i>Eligible employees have joined the nominated pension scheme. The last date of re-declaration of compliance was 4th November 2022. The next due date is 3rd February 2026.</i>						
	<i>It is noted that the Council undertook a review of salaries at a meeting held on 18th November 2024 (Ref: 7.06).</i>						
Asset control	Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets Cross-checking on insurance cover <i>A separate asset register is in place. Values are recorded at insurance value. The total value of assets is recorded at £144,553. The figure in the asset register corresponds with the figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR.</i>						
	<i>The asset register was approved at the meeting on 17th March 2025 (Ref: 6.01).</i>						
Bank Reconciliation	Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements <i>All were in order. Bank Reconciliations are carried out regularly. The bank statements reconciled with the end of year accounts and bank reconciliations for all accounts.</i>						
	<i>Reconciled Bank Balances were confirmed as:</i>						
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><i>Lloyds Community</i></td> <td><i>£56,429.84</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Lloyds Instant</i></td> <td><i>£ 5,095.48</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>NS&I</i></td> <td><i>£13,859.30 as at 1st January 2025</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Lloyds Community</i>	<i>£56,429.84</i>	<i>Lloyds Instant</i>	<i>£ 5,095.48</i>	<i>NS&I</i>	<i>£13,859.30 as at 1st January 2025</i>
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Reserves	General Reserves are reasonable for the activities of the Council Earmarked Reserves are identified <i>The Council have adequate general reserves (£28,383) and has identified earmarked reserves in its year-end accounts.</i>
Year-end procedures	Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents Verifying sample payments and income Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate. <i>End of year accounts is prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis.</i>
Sole Trustee	The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee <i>The Council is not a sole trustee.</i>
Internal Audit Procedures	<i>The 2024 Internal Audit report was considered by the Council at a meeting held on 20th May 2024 (Ref: 12.01)</i> <i>A review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was carried out on 17th March 2025 (Ref: 7.04).</i> <i>Heelis & Lodge were appointed as Internal Auditor at a meeting held on 20th January 2025 (Ref: 7.04).</i>
External Audit	<i>The Council formally approved the 2024 AGAR at a meeting of the full Council held on 20th May 2024 (Ref: 12.03 & 04)</i> <i>The External Auditor's report was considered at a meeting held on 19th August 2024 (Ref: 7.03)</i> <i>There were no matters arising from the External Audit.</i>

Additional Comments/Recommendations

- The Annual Parish Council meeting was held on 20th May 2024. The first item of business was the Election of Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- There are no additional comments/recommendations to make in relation to this audit.
- I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for her assistance and for the high quality of documentation presented in the Audit File.

Dave Crimmin

Dave Crimmin PSLCC
Heelis & Lodge
2nd May 2025

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