

Parish Council Accounts Financial Year Ending 31 March 2022

Half Year Internal Audit Report

I confirm that I have completed an independent examination of the documentation of the Fownhope Parish Council for the first half of financial year ending 31 March 2022.

I confirm that I am independent of financial decision making, financial management, financial control and financial procedures of Fownhope Parish Council.

SCOPE OF AUDIT

The internal audit for financial year ending 31 March 2021 did not find any areas of non-compliance with the requirements of governance and accountability. No recommendations for improvement were made. The internal control objectives set out in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return were met.

The scope of this half year audit is a review policies and procedures documentation as suggested in the audit for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 and in the email to me from Fownhope Clerk, Helen Tinson dated 17 November 2021.

DOCUMENTATION EXAMINED

I have examined documents available on the Fownhope Website under the section for the Parish Council.

FINDINGS

Review of Recommended Improvements for Documentation

1. Review the Councillors' Code of Conduct document. Identify its source document and add the dates for the Parish Council's approval and the future date for review.

Findings

The Code of Conduct of Council Members includes the identification of the source document, the date of the Parish Council's approval and adoption and the future date for review.

2. Review the Complaints Procedure document by adding the correct reference to the Code of Conduct document.

Findings

The Complaints Procedure document refers to an earlier version of the Code of Conduct (adopted 8 May 2019).

3. Update the link to Finance Regulations on the Parish Council website page <https://www.fownhope.org.uk/financial-reporting>.

Findings

The link to Financial Regulations correctly leads to the current Financial Regulations document.

4. Review and amend Assets Register document to include the Council's liabilities, even if there are none.

Findings

The Assets Register was not inspected.

5. Prepare a new document (or documents) detailing Financial Procedures or Standing Orders and have it approved and adopted by the Council. The document(s) should give more detail applicable to how the Council organises its financial affairs in order to meet the requirements of the Financial Regulations.

Findings

A new document, Standard Operating Procedure to Ensure Compliance with Financial Regulations has been prepared. It was adopted on 7 July 2021.

The document includes the procedures which are required by the Financial Regulations.

6. Modify the financial report template for Council meetings to include receipts and payments listed under each head of the budget and expenditure compared with budget.

Findings

The minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 6 October 2021 were examined.

Costs comparing budget against actual expenditure were reported and attached to these minutes as Appendix B. I have not examined the net position report produced by Scribe accounting software referred to in the minutes.

7. Review the requirement for written orders for goods and services and incorporate any procedures in the recommended new Financial Procedures document.

Findings

The new document, Standard Operating Procedure to Ensure Compliance with Financial Regulations, includes a procedure for written orders.

8. Prepare a strategy and policy document for investments which includes (but is not limited to) references to relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance; roles and responsibilities of the IAG including functional links to the Finance Working Group and hence to the Council; role of Hargreaves Lansdown and how it is managed; reporting requirements; method of ensuring compliance with the Finance Regulations paragraph 8.3 to 8.7.

Findings

A document Financial Regulations Appendix 1.0 - Investment Strategy is now available on the Fownhope website. It was approved at the Council meeting 5 May 2021. The Investment Strategy was documented in the Investment Register spreadsheet at the time of the last half year audit. The current document does not include all the recommendations.

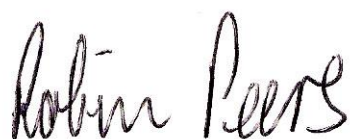
CONCLUSION

The half year audit for financial year ending 31 March 2021 made recommendations for procedures and standing orders which could improve the Council's governance and accountability. The Parish Council has implemented the recommendations which it considers to be appropriate for improving accountability and governance.

Not all recommendations have been implemented but this is not a non-compliance with the requirements of governance and accountability.

I have found no non-compliances with the requirements of governance and accountability in the documents I have examined.

I have no recommendations for improvements.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Peers". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Robin Peers

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7 December 2021