



WINTERTON-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

Statement of Internal Control

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003: state that the relevant body (in this case the Parish Council) shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial management of the body is adequate and effective and that the body has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of that body's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk. The relevant body shall conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control.

Internal Control: The system of internal control is designed to reduce the financial risk of the Parish Council to an acceptable level.

Financial Management: The Parish Council has approved a set of financial standing orders which set out the way that Council's finances are to be managed. These are reviewed and approved annually.

Responsible Financial Officer: The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is responsible for the day-to-day financial management of the Council. The duties of the responsible financial officer are reviewed and approved annually.

Signatories: Two councillors selected from three named signatories must sign to agree all payments/cheques and online payments. The payment signatory shall check the supporting document at the time of signing, to ensure that the cheque or online payment agrees with the amount of the invoice and the payee named on the invoice. If used, the cheque stub should also be initialled to record that the name on the cheque stub is the same as that on the cheque. Financial documents to be published or audited should be signed by the RFO and the Chair of the council or their properly appointed delegate.

Emergencies: In the event of an emergency where it is not possible to hold a council meeting, or where payments need to be made before a meeting, the RFO shall have the delegated authority to make all payments that are due, where the expenditure has already been authorised by the Council either specifically or through budget allocations. Emergency processes are detailed in the Financial Regulations and the Standing Orders.

Payments: All payments should be reported to Council as soon as possible, and the invoices made available for further inspection. A councillor who is not a bank signatory shall check these payments to the bank statements and email the RFO as evidence of this check on a quarterly basis. This check shall be reported to and audited by the next Finance Advisory Group (FAG) and to the subsequent Full Council meeting.

The list of online payments to be agreed at a meeting will be available for inspection together with the supporting documentation/invoices. A councillor who is not a bank signatory shall review these documents together with the bank reconciliations at least once per quarter. They will email the RFO as evidence of this check.

At least once per year, the RFO will send evidence of the balances in all the Council's accounts to a councillor who is not a bank signatory who shall email the RFO as evidence of this check. This check shall be reported to and audited by the next Finance Advisory Group and/or the next Full Council meeting.

Finance Advisory Group: The Finance Advisory Group is made up of at least three councillors and will meet at least 4 times per year. Its remit is mostly financial management and audit, with budget reviews and allocations and to report, or make recommendations, to Full Council meetings. Before January of each year, the FAG shall review the Council's budget in detail and shall make a recommendation to the full Council for the precept for the forthcoming year. The Chair of the Finance Advisory Group may be the RFO.

Internal audit: The Council has appointed an independent and competent internal auditor (reviewed bi-annually) to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the internal controls annually. The auditor will send a report to the RFO and the Proper Officer (if not the same person) for circulation to the FAG and Full Council to report their findings. This also completes Section 4 of the Annual Return. Any guidance or issues raised by an internal auditor will be examined by the FAG for recommendation to Full Council. The internal audit report will be published on the Parish Council's website.

External audit: The Council's external auditors are currently PKF. They complete Section 3 of the Annual Return; their comments and recommendations are reported to the full Council.

Review: This review shall be carried out annually and recorded in the Council's minutes.

Signed:

(Chairman)

Dated: 19th April 2023

Signed:

(Responsible Financial Officer)

Dated: 19th April 2023

The Responsible Financial Officer of Winterton-on-Sea Parish Council
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The Chairman of Winterton-on-Sea Parish Council, Cllr. Mark Bobby

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Adopted: April 2023

Review due: March 2024