

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDIT TESTING

LEYBURN TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

RFO: CHARLOTTE SMITH

VISIT: 29th JUNE 2020

YEAR ENDING: 31ST MARCH 2020

INTERNAL CONTROL	SUGGESTED TESTING	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
PROPER BOOKKEEPING	Is the cashbook maintained and up to date?	The Council uses the computerised accounting package SCRIBE and cashbooks are maintained for various bank accounts. They were complete for the end of year and regularly reconciled.	
	Is the cashbook arithmetically correct?	SCRIBE is a self-balancing system.	
	Is the cashbook regularly balanced?	On a monthly basis prior to each Council meeting.	
A) STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS ADOPTED AND APPLIED; AND B) PAYMENTS CONTROLS	Has the council formally adopted standing orders and financial regulations?	At the 21 st January 2019 meeting Financial Regulations were adopted. Standing Orders were adopted at an Extraordinary meeting on 11 th September 2018.	

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	Has a Responsible financial officer been appointed with specific duties?	Charlotte Smith has been appointed RFO. She has a contract and a current job description.	
	Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased?	Tender / Quotation book seen – examples of quotations being sought during the year including Christmas Light electricity, Kelberdale toilets caretaker and Grounds maintenance.	
	Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?	Yes	
	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Yes	
	Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?	£7,483 payments itemised on SCRIBE system.	
RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS	Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity?	No unusual activities identified.	

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	Do minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment?	Various Risk Management activities are operated by the Council, including Richmondshire DC inspection of play equipment on a monthly basis. RoSPA also carries out an inspection annually. In addition a very comprehensive COVID-19 Risk Assessment has been prepared. However, the overall Risk Assessment is quite dated but currently under review by the Clerk.	The Council formalise its risk assessment arrangements in an updated risk assessment document.
	Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	Policy for year ending 31 st May 2020 with RSA seen – premium of £8,035 paid. Comprehensive policy including Thornborough Hall (valued at £3.75m) together with Employers Liability £10m; Public/Products Liability £15m; Fidelity Guarantee £250k; Legal Expenses £200k.	
	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	The Risk Management Policy sets out checks that are in place. In addition a Councillor has undertaken spot checks on a sample of payments during the year. The council reviewed the checklist used in 2018-19 as a result of the change of banks during the previous year and the move to internet banking.	
	(Burial Authorities only) Is the Council aware of the Ministry of Justice guidance on “Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials”	Richmond District Council had tested headstones in the cemetery and found over 100 to be unstable. Relatives are in the process of being contacted.	

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BUDGETARY CONTROLS	Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?	Comprehensive exercise undertaken to calculate the precept requirements – at the January 2020 meeting a precept of £58,731.47 was set for 2020/21 (an increase of 7.9% on 2019/20).	
	Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council?	Actual expenditure is summarised for each meeting of the Council and compared to the budget.	
	Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	None seen.	
INCOME CONTROLS	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	<p>Income from use of Thornborough Hall, car park and toilet donations, VAT refund, grants, market rents, cemetery fees, wayleaves etc. Market Superintendent collects rents, Clerk or Assistant empties honesty boxes. Rents for Hall invoiced.</p> <p>At the 20th January 2020 meeting wedding fees for the Oak Room were reviewed as were market rents and electricity charges at the 16th March 2020 meeting.</p>	
	Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification?	Remittance advice notes from Richmondshire DC seen – agree with precept requirement for the year.	

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	Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective?	Honesty box income collected and counted in office prior to banking.	
PETTY CASH PROCEDURES	Is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts?	No petty cash	
	Is petty cash expenditure reported to each council meeting?	Not applicable.	
	Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?	Not applicable.	
PAYROLL CONTROLS	Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions?	5 employees – Clerk; Deputy; Market Superintendent; 2 caretakers. All have contracts of employment. Wedding Host and Handyman are self-employed.	
	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?	Council sets salaries each time a notification is received from the NALC or National Living Wage as appropriate.	
	Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council?	Yes.	

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	Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the council as an employer?	Yes.	
ASSET CONTROLS	Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care?	Yes – Asset register seen.	
	Are the assets and Investments registers up to date?	Yes – updated for purchase costs during the year.	
	Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?	Yes, with the exception of some assets valued at cost.	
BANK RECONCILIATION	Is there a bank reconciliation for each account?	Three accounts – current account, Shawl account, and Money Market “savings” account. Two accounts were closed during the year.	
	Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion?	Yes.	
	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	No	

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	Is the value of investments held summarised on the reconciliation?	No investments other than the bank accounts.	
YEAR-END PROCEDURES	Are year end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)?	Yes – on an income and expenditure basis.	
	Do accounts agree with the cashbook?	Yes	
	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	Yes	
	Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?	Yes	
OTHER ISSUES	Is the Council registered with the Information Commissioner?	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner – registration number ZA426051.	

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	What arrangements does the Council have for the back up of computer files?	The Council uses of Dropbox to secure computer files remotely. This was agreed at the 20 th May 2019 meeting.	
	Does the Council have responsibility for any Trust Funds? If so, are they independently examined?	The Council has no trust funds.	
	Any other issues that are worthy of reporting.	No	