

HEELIS & LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

Internal Audit Report for Boxford 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: £10,100

Expenditure: £14,043

Reserves: £3,578

AGAR 2024 / 2025 Completion:

Section One: **Yes - unsigned**

Section Two: **Yes - unsigned**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024 / 2025: **Yes**

Certificate of Exemption: **Yes - unsigned**

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

All were found to be in order. VAT payments are tracked and identified within the year-end accounts.

The cashbook is referenced providing an audit trail. Supporting paperwork is in place and 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: **28th May 2024 (Ref: 3)**

Financial Regulations in place: **Yes**

Reviewed: **28th May 2024 (Ref: 3)**

VAT reclaimed during the year: **No**

Registered: **No**

General Power of Competence: **No**

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

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 – Z9515387 Expiry 22/06/25

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: *No*

Insurance was in place for the year of audit.

There was no evidence in the minutes that the Risk Assessment, including Internal Controls, had been reviewed during the year of the audit.

Recommendation (1): *To undertake and minute a review of the Risk Assessment and Internal Controls during the year of audit.*

Recommendation (2): *To adopt a Statement of Internal Control.*

The Council have effective 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: £250,000

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: [Yes](#)

Website: www.boxford.org.uk

- a) all items of expenditure above £100
Published – Yes – contained within the minutes
- b) annual governance statement (By 1 July)
2024 Annual Return, Section One Published – Yes
- c) end-of-year accounts (By 1 July)
2024 Annual Return, Section Two Published – Yes
- d) internal audit report (By 1 July)
2024 Annual Return, Section Four Published – Yes
- e) list of councillor or member responsibilities
Published – Yes
- f) the details of public land and building assets (By 1 July)
Published – Yes – No land or building assets.
- g) minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings
Published – Yes

The Council have met the requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller councils.

Under **The Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 9(6 & 7)** a smaller council having certified itself as an Exempt Authority must publish on their website:

Certificate of Exemption

Certificate of Exemption 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. Please be advised that this should be part of your AGAR publication requirements.

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: 28/06/24 Start Date: 01/07/24 End Date: 09/08/24

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

Precept: £10,100 (2024 / 2025) Date: 22nd January 2024 (Ref: 9c)

Precept: £10,400 (2025 / 2026) Date: 27th January 2025 (Ref: 10c)

Satisfactory budgetary procedures are in place. The precept was agreed in full council and the precept decision and amount has been clearly minuted. 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

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.

Petty Cash Associated books and established system in place

A satisfactory expenses system is in place with supporting paperwork. No Petty Cash held.

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 – Autela Payroll Services**

Employer PAYE Reference: 475/ZB58419

P60's issued: Yes

The Council continue to operate RTI in accordance with HMRC regulations. Payroll is outsourced. All supporting paperwork is in place, and a P60 has been produced as part of the year-end process. The council has not joined a pension scheme.

No evidence that the council has made a re-declaration of compliance to the Pensions Regulator was provided in the Audit file.

It is noted that the Council undertook a review of salaries at a meeting held on 25th November 2024 (Ref: 11c).

Asset control Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets
Cross-checking on insurance cover

A separate asset register is in place. Values are recorded at cost value. The total value of assets is recorded at £26,808. The figure in the asset register corresponds with the figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR.

Bank Reconciliation	<p>Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements</p> <p><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></p> <p><i>Reconciled Bank Balances were confirmed as:</i></p> <table border="0" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td><i>Unity Current</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><i>£3,577.95</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Unity Current</i>	<i>£3,577.95</i>
<i>Unity Current</i>	<i>£3,577.95</i>		
Reserves	<p>General Reserves are reasonable for the activities of the Council Earmarked Reserves are identified</p> <p><i>The Council has a very low level of general reserves, £3,578 (34% of Precept), with no earmarked reserves.</i></p>		
Year-end procedures	<p>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.</p> <p><i>End of year accounts is prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis.</i></p>		
Sole Trustee	<p>The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee</p> <p><i>The Council is not a sole trustee.</i></p>		
Internal Audit Procedures	<p><i>The 2024 Internal Audit report was considered by the Council at a meeting held on 24th June 2024 (Ref: 2)</i></p> <p><i>Recommendation (4):</i> <i>When applicable, the council's response to the Internal Audit recommendations should be contained in the minutes of the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>A review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was carried out on 24th June 2024 (Ref: 2)</i></p> <p><i>Heelis & Lodge were not appointed as Internal Auditor at a meeting held during the Audit year (from the minutes provided or on the website).</i></p> <p><i>Recommendation (5):</i> <i>It is a requirement to appoint the Internal Auditor and record the decision in the minutes of the meeting.</i></p>		
External Audit	<p><i>The Council formally approved the 2024 AGAR at a meeting of the full Council held on 24th June 2024 (Ref: 3)</i></p> <p><i>The Council declared themselves Exempt from External audit for the 2023-2024 financial year.</i></p>		

Additional Comments/Recommendations

- The Annual Parish Council meeting was held on 28th May 2024. The first item of business was the Election of Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- The minutes for the March 2025 meeting were not present in the Audit file or updated on the website.
- I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for the quality of documentation presented in the Audit File.



Dave Crimmin PSLCC
Heelis & Lodge
2nd May 2025

HEELIS&LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

www.heelisandlodge.co.uk

INVOICE

To:

Boxford Parish Council
Farm Gate
High Street
Chieveley
RG20 8TA

Invoice No: HLD2425
Date: 2nd May 2025

Details	Quantity	Amount (£)	Total (£)
To carry out the Year-end Internal Audit for Boxford Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2025.	1	130.00	130.00
Pick-up and return courier service.	2	6.66	13.32
Total			143.32

Please make cheques payable to: Heelis & Lodge

Bank Details: Account 02539349 Sort Code 09-01-50

Terms – 14 days

Thank you.

HEELIS&LODGE

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