

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND CONTROL

Under the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006, Parish Councils are required to carry out reviews of the “effectiveness of internal audit and systems of internal control”. At the Annual Parish Council meeting on 9th May 2022 the following statement was put to the Councillors and accepted.

Finance

The Parish Council receives financial reports at its regular meetings, providing information on receipts and payments in the most recent period, a year-to-date R&P report and a bank reconciliation to ensure that the published accounts correlate with the bank statements. In addition, the Parish Council undergoes an audit every year, starting shortly after March 31st, the financial year end. All relevant papers are sent to the Internal Auditor, who performs random checks and verifies the published financial position. A report is sent back by the Internal Auditor to the Parish Council for consideration and approval, and all this information provides the basis for Pages 1,2 and 4 of the Annual Return that every council, small or large, has to complete. The Internal Auditor may highlight necessary changes or adjustments and may make recommendations on various matters. If either income or expenditure exceeds £25k, this detail is sent to the External Auditor (along with an explanation about significant changes in income and expenditure over the previous year) for review and to provide their professional opinion on the financial position of the Parish Council. If both income and expenditure are under £25k a Certificate of Exemption is completed and sent to the External Auditor. Once the process is complete (and assuming that all has gone well), a Notice of Audit Completion is published on the website, supported by all the financial information mentioned above. These reports are updated as the audit process progresses until that final notice of completion.

Administration

At its meeting on the 9th May 2022 the Council adopted the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020. All Councillors have prepared and submitted to SCDC “Declarations of Interest”. For compliance, the Suffolk Coastal District Council CoC was reiterated at the Council meeting in January 2016 were incorporated in the Standing Orders in May 2016. The Clerk maintains a register for recording declarations of interest. The Council has Standing Orders, which were reviewed in March 2018, based on the NALC Model, together with Financial Regulations, again based on the NALC Model (2016) and adopted at the meeting on 9th May 2017. The Freedom of Information Act Model was adopted in November 2008. The Clerk maintains a numerical register of source, date and content of all correspondence received, which is listed on the agenda of the appropriate meeting. The Clerk maintains an Asset Register. The Minutes of Meetings, together with reports of sub-committees, are circulated to Councillors in advance, and at the next meeting, approved and signed by the Chairman of the meeting, or the appropriate sub-committee Chairman. Agenda are posted on Parish Notice Boards and Web Site; a Public Open Forum is held prior to meetings to receive questions from parishioners and reports from County/District Councillor, Police, Public Transport Officer and Tree Warden. The Council has a web site set up to be compliant with the Transparency Act. An RFO is appointed to administer the financial duties of the PC. The Council considers itself compliant with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018), and compliance Risk Assessment completed. The consideration of planning applications has been absorbed into PC meetings

The Recreation Ground (RG) is managed by Trustees (the Parish Council appoints a representative) and manages its own administrative and financial affairs. A report is presented to most meetings of the Parish Council and Summary Accounts are made available each year. The Play Area is professionally inspected on an annual basis and any modifications or repairs implemented, weekly inspections are also undertaken by RG Committee representatives for insurance purposes. Risk Assessments (RAs), covering the RG, Play Area and Village Green are currently completed annually. A RA for Beacon lighting is carried out prior to each lighting event.

Signed..........

Date.....22/03/2023.....