



**ASHCHURCH RURAL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Internal auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2024**  
**Name of Auditor: Anita Sach**

**GAPTC internal audits comply with the proper practices outlined in the Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities – A Practitioners' Guide and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.**

**The GAPTC internal audit reviews and reports on whether the systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective. The audit tests a variety of documents, including agendas and minutes, policies, insurance and risk management processes, to ensure Council meets the requirements set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return. The internal audit does not involve the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of an authority in order to detect error or fraud.**

**Our auditors are independent of the Council and are competent to be able to carry out the requirements of the internal audit service.**

**NOTE The auditor will complete the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) page on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). The AIAR informs the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) assertions on the AGAR, so when council reviews the AGS, the responses must reflect the AIAR report.**

**1. Council working documents**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A</b>	<b>Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
1.1	Have Standing Orders been a) tailored to council?	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes		January minutes 22.01.24.14.3 Policies section of website

	b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted?		<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1</a>	
1.2	Have Financial Regulations been a) tailored to council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? (Objective B)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1</a>	January minutes 22.01.24.14.4 Policies section of website
1.3	Does the council a) give grants? b) have a grant-awarding policy?	a) Yes b) Yes		a) Not so far this year b) Policies section of website Reviewed May minutes 22.5.23.12.d
1.4	Have items/ services been competitively purchased in accordance with Financial and/or Procurement Regulations?	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2 &amp; 3</a>	February minutes 19.02.24.17
1.5	Code of conduct reviewed in the last 2/3 years?	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	March 2023 minutes 20.03.23.10.1a Policies section of website

## 2. Finance

Ref	Test	Meets	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
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		<b>reqmts? Yes, No or N/A</b>		
2.1	Has the General Power of Competence been adopted (e.g. a minute reference), if Council qualifies?	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	May minutes 22.5.23.10
2.2	S137 a) is there a separate account for payments? b) are totals within statutory limits? (for Council's that do not held General Power of Competence)	N/A	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1 &amp; 3</a>	
2.3	Is there an annual council authorisation of Direct Debit list and Standing Orders? ( <a href="#">Objective B</a> )	N/A	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1</a>	No DDs or SOs
2.4	Was Petty Cash expenditure approved, if any? ( <a href="#">Objective F</a> )	N/A	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1</a>	
2.5	Is all expenditure supported by VAT invoices, if applicable?	Yes		Sampling for transactions checklist

	(Objective B)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
2.6	VAT – a) recorded in accounts b) reclaimed? (Objective B)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	VAT refund to 31/3/23 recorded in July 2023 Financial Report

### 3. Risk management

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
3.1	Insurance policy a) in place? b) cover reviewed to ensure still fit for purpose? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Review May minutes 22.5.23.12.f Renewal November Policy schedule viewed
3.2	Copy of Risk Management policy a) adopted? b) reviewed annually by Council? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	January minutes 22.01.24.14.1 Policies section of website
3.3	Asset register a) reviewed regularly? (Objective H) b) published on website?	a) Yes b) Yes		May minutes 22.5.23.11.e Asset register on website dated 31/3/23

	(Objective L)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	
3.4	Evidence that assets a) have been inspected for risk? b) reported in minutes? c) any actions undertaken? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Recommend that there is a formal inspection which is documented and minuted. This is important evidence in the case of an insurance claim against the council.  Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Councillors report ad hoc, eg July minutes 17.7.2023.16
3.5	Evidence that internal controls a) take place? b) are documented? c) minuted? as per Council's Financial Regulations/Standing Orders (Objective B)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	January minutes 16.6 Internal Control report viewed – signed by 2 councillors
3.6	Bank reconciliations are on agenda to be considered by Council? (Objective I)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Bank reconciliations on all agendas June signed bank reconciliation viewed
3.7	Review of a) investments? b) bank mandates (signatories on bank accounts)? (Objective B/C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	a) January minutes 22.01.24.16.7 b) May minutes 22.5.23.11.i
3.8	If bank cards in use,	N/A		

	are proper procedures in place? (Objective B)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
3.9	Are a) physical records secure? b) electronic records backed up?	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	a) Stored on locked cabinet. b) Backed up to External Hard drive and Cloud

#### 4. Budgetary controls

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
4.1	Was a budget properly for the year under review a) prepared? b) adopted? c) minuted? (Objective D)	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Minute 19.12.22.10c Budget viewed
4.2	a) Were the earmarked objectives of the reserves identified in the budget, if any? b) Were the general reserves reasonable? (Objective D)	a) None b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	No earmarked reserves General reserves equivalent to 7 months' expenditure

4.3	Was the precept demand for the year under review properly minuted in full council?	Yes		December minutes 19.12.22.10c
4.4	Did the council a) regularly compare budget vs spend (as detailed in the financial regulations) b) and evidenced in the minutes? (Objective D)	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Budget monitoring is included on agenda for most meetings May minutes 22.5.23.11.c May budget monitoring report viewed
4.5	Are any significant variances from budget reported?	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	

## 5. Payroll

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
5.1	Do all staff have a contract of employment?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Assistant Clerk contract viewed for 22/23 internal audit
5.2	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by Council? (Objective G)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	May payroll viewed
5.3	Has Council	a) Yes		a) Payments to HMRC in accounts

	<p>a) registered as an employer with HMRC?  b) have PAYE / NIC been properly dealt with (including year-end procedures)?  (Objective G)</p>	<p>b) Yes</p>		<p>b) Payroll carried out by PATA</p>
5.4	<p>Are Councillor's allowances and expenses properly authorised &amp; controlled, if any?</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1</p>	
5.5	<p>Pension provision – eligible employees  a) offered pension scheme?  b) outcome minuted?</p>	<p>a) Yes  b) Yes</p>	<p>Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</p>	<p>April 2022 minute 25.4.22.22</p>
5.6	<p>Is Council  a) registered with the Pension Regulator for auto-enrolment pensions?  b) Has auto-enrolment registration with Pension Regulator been reviewed (required every 3 years)</p>	<p>a) Yes  b) Yes</p>	<p>Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</p>	<p>Registration letter viewed for 22/23 internal audit.  Re-registration due September 2024</p>



## 6. Year-end procedures

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
6.1	Are debtors and creditors recorded properly on separate balance sheet if using Income & Expenditure reporting? (Objective J)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
6.2	Does Council as a whole consider the year-end accounts in addition to 6.5? (Objective J)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	May minutes 22.5.23.11.d
6.3	Minute confirming that council is eligible for Certificate of Exemption (only for councils with a turnover of less than £25,000) (Objective K)	N/A	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
6.4	Annual Governance Statement, section	Yes		May minutes 22.5.23.11.f

	1 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 2 below)?		<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	
6.5	Annual Statement of Accounts, section 2 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 1 above)?	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	May minutes 22.5.23.11.g
6.6	Are all sections of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return published on the website? (Objective L/N)	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	Annual Accounts section of website
6.7	Did council correctly provide for the exercise of public rights? (Objective M)	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 4</a>	May minutes 22.5.23.11.h Notice in Annual Accounts section of website
6.8	Previous internal audit report reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7</a>	March 2023 minutes 20.03.23.11f
6.9	Previous external	Yes		August minutes 21.8.23.11.4

audit report (for councils with turnover over £25,000) reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7</a>
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## 7. Other matters

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
7.1	Policies in place for compliance with GDPR, such as Data Protection Policy for Staff & Councillors and for the public?	Yes	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	Data Protection and Privacy policies adopted December 2022
7.2	Is the Council a Managing Trustee?	No	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9</a>	
7.3	Do trustees meet at least once a year and publish separate accounts? (Objective O)	N/A	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9</a>	
7.4	Website Accessibility Statement on	Yes		Home page

	website home page?		<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	
7.5	Did council formally appoint GAPTC as the Internal Auditor?	Yes	Council confirmed that the Internal Auditor is competent and independent of Council when appointing them <a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 6</a>	January minutes 22.01.24.16.8
7.6	Are registers up to date for council-owned burial grounds (if any) and purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burials certificate completed?	N/A	<a href="#">Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3</a>	

## 8. Procedures

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments	Evidence
8.1	Minutes: a) DPIs or other interests recorded? b) published on website in draft form within one month (mandatory for councillors with a turnover of less than £25,000)? <a href="#">(Objective L)</a>	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes	a) Recommend that if a councillor declares a DPI, it should be minuted that they left the meeting for the agenda item (July meeting)	a) DPIs on all minutes. b) 22 January minutes on website 6/2/24 c) June and December minutes viewed

	c) initialled on each page and final page signed?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
8.2	List of members' a) responsibilities (Objective L) and b) interests held and published on the website?	a) Yes b) Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Councillors' section of website
8.3	Agendas signed and displayed on website 3 clear days' prior to meeting? (Objective L)	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Agendas on website
8.4	Summons issued in proper format?	Yes	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Agendas on website