

BETLEY, BALTERLEY AND WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – FINANCIAL YEAR 2025-26

The Internal Audit has been undertaken with reference to page 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025-26, and Section 4 of the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England Practitioners Guide. The opinion formed during the Internal Audit is based on the evidence provided in the form of documents, accounts and receipts etc., in addition to consultation with the Clerk.

Area Covered	Observations	Recommendations
A. Appropriate accounting records	Accounting records are kept on a spreadsheet, referencing expenditure to minutes and budget headings. Supporting documents are kept digitally.	
B. Financial regulations, payment controls and VAT	Upcoming payments are itemised in the minutes and authorisation confirmed. Cashbook payments made are referenced to the minutes and approved. VAT claims for 1/10/24-31/3/25 and 1/4/25-30/9/25 were received in the year, suggesting claims are made on a timely basis. Four queries re omissions (post 31/9/25) were noted in the cashbook VAT analysis. The Clerk has been made aware and responded that the full year and previous year are double-checked for any omissions or amendments when the claim is prepared.	Recording VAT at the initial point of input would reduce the risk of error and be more efficient.
C. Risk management	A detailed risk assessment document which was prepared and reviewed in the year. A comprehensive insurance policy covers key assets, employer, libel and slander, and public liability insurance of £10m, with adequate levels of cover.	
D. Budgetary process	The cashbook records spend to date v annual budget. This is presented at each meeting and recorded in the minutes. Minutes reflect that budget headings are reviewed regularly, with any reallocation discussed and approved. A draft budget was submitted 23/10/25 and the precept and	

	budget for 2026-27 were discussed and approved on 27/11/25.	
E. Income controls	Changes to the precept for the coming year were discussed and approved 27/11/25.	
F. Petty cash	There were no petty cash transactions.	
G. Payroll controls	The clerk's salary is processed by Shires Pay Services, ensuring accurate calculation of net pay and tax and RTI filing with HMRC.	
H. Asset controls	An asset register is maintained, and assets were inspected on 3/9/25. Historically, dates of purchase have not been recorded. Key assets are listed on the insurance policy.	Recording dates of purchase, where possible, would help to identify and budget for repairs and renewals.
I. Bank reconciliation	Bank reconciliations are done on a regular basis, presented at meetings and approved in the minutes. The cashbook reconciled to the bank statements at the year-end.	
J. Accounting statements	The financial statements are prepared on the correct basis and agree to the accounting records.	
K. Exemption from assurance review	A certificate of exemption was filed for 2024-25.	
L. Website	Information required by the Transparency code for smaller authorities is available on the website.	
M. Exercise of public rights	The 2024-25 Notice of Public Rights was published on the website, dated 7/4/25 for the period 3/6-13/7/25. It is impossible to tell when this was posted to the website.	
N. AGAR publication	Publication requirements for the 2024-25 AGAR have been fulfilled. Bank reconciliations and variances are within the minutes.	
O. Digital and data compliance	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.	