

Hannington Parish Council

Corporate Governance Questionnaire: for completion by the Council Chairman, not the Clerk / RFO

The statement below was submitted by the Chairman to the Parish Council meeting 20th March for their comment and agreement

Area	Response (please provide detail below or on supplementary pages)
<p>Please confirm whether or not Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place. If so, when were they last updated and formally adopted by the Council? (Please provide an electronic copy of both. Electronic copies can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' Select Governance, scroll down to pages Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for the current version.</p>	<p>CONFIRMED: Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were approved by the Council at its meeting on 26th September 2017. See extract from Minutes 8.c and 8.d reproduced below;</p> <p>COUNCIL DECISION:- i. to agree and adopt the current Financial Regulations (as amended by Council September 2016, and subsequently agreed and presented at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council 5th May 2017) <u>with no amendments</u>, and, ii. to agree and adopt the current Standing Orders (as amended by Council September 2016 and subsequently presented to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council 5th May 2017) <u>with no amendments</u>.</p>
<p>Where original minutes are not provided for our examination, please confirm that each page of the master copy is signed or initialed by the Chairman at the subsequent meeting when they are approved. Electronic copies of Minutes can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' Select Council Meetings, then select year and scroll down to the appropriate meeting, then access Agenda Item - Minutes.</p>	<p>CONFIRMED: I, as Chairman, sign the final page of the Minutes once they have been approved at the next subsequent meeting. Following advice from last year's internal audit report, I also initial each of the numbered pages. Draft Minutes, i.e. those seen by Cllrs soon after the meeting, but prior to sign-off at next Council Meeting, are circulated to residents and are posted on the HPC website. The Draft Minutes then form part of the Agenda papers for the next subsequent meeting where they are formally adopted, with amendments if necessary. The approved Minutes are then posted on the website, as the last item of the Agenda. The copies posted on the website are NOT signed, following previous advice about potential illegal access to signatures. Signed copies are held by the Clerk.</p>
<p>Please provide detail of the approved precept for 2017-18 and 2018-19, including reference to the relevant approving minutes. Electronic copies of the Draft Budget's can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' Select Council Meetings, then select year and scroll down to the appropriate meeting, then</p>	<p>The Draft Budget 2017/18 including request to BDBC for Precept and Grants was considered at the Council meeting 13th December 2016 [See Agenda and Minute 12.c.]</p> <p>The Draft Budget 2018/19 including decision on Precept was agreed by Council 20th December 2017 [See Agenda and Minute 13 (e) Decisions 1 and 2].</p>

<p>access Agenda Item – Budget for the relevant year. The Agenda includes the detailed Budget Report.</p>	
<p>Does the Council meet the criteria for adoption of the General Power of Competence and, if so, has it been adopted? Please confirm minute reference.</p> <p>If reliance is still placed on S.137, etc, when considering the approval of grants and donations to local (and other) bodies, are the relevant powers considered and formally minuted?</p> <p>Where detail is only set out on an agenda paper, please provide an example.</p>	<p>Reliance is still placed on S.137 etc. However, Council agreed when setting its Budget 2017/18 to not continue with the only grant that it makes i.e. the grant to the Parochial Church Council.</p> <p>In previous years, the Council had paid the grant; providing financial support to the parochial church for the sum of £250 towards the churchyard maintenance costs. This grant compared loosely with the £200 Specific Grant paid to HPC by BDBC.</p> <p>Provision for the grant at £250 was included in the Budget 2016-17 and its payment was approved 13th December 2016 by Minute para 12.c.11.</p>
<p>Please confirm that all internal and external audit reports are presented to and agreed by members, also with agreement on the actions to be taken to address any issues identified. Again, please provide detail of the relevant meeting and minute reference.</p> <p>Electronic copies of Agendas and Minutes can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by</p> <p>URL ‘See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website’</p> <p>Select Council Meetings, then select year and scroll down to the appropriate meeting, then access Agenda Item – e.g. 15a and Minutes.</p>	<p>CONFIRMED.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Statement 2016-17, was considered by the Council at its meeting 9th May 2017 Agenda Item 15.a.i, and also at the next meeting 26th September 2017 Agenda Item 15.a where the External Auditor’s comments were also reported The Clerk’s report drew attention to the various points raised and the action taken. See Agendas and Minutes 15(a) for the May 2017 and Sept 2017 meetings</p>
<p>Has the Council reviewed an updated version of the financial risk assessment and formally approved its re-adoption within the financial year (Governance and Accountability Manual – 2014 refers)? Please provide an electronic copy.</p> <p>Electronic copies of the Risk Register(s) can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by</p> <p>URL ‘See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website’</p> <p>EITHER going to the Agenda papers for the Sept 2017 meeting or by going to the Risk Management folder on the website and accessing Risk Register</p>	<p>CONFIRMED</p> <p>The Council’s Risk Register is supported by two further sub-risk registers covering HCC - Highways and Hannington Village Green. All three Risk Registers were considered and agreed at the Council Meeting 26th Sept 2017 (see Minute 8 (i), (ii) and (iii) dealing with the three registers referred to above.</p> <p>The Clerk will be working to draw these three registers into a single coherent document.</p> <p>The Council also gave specific consideration in the year to the risks and potential Council liability for the Village Fair 2017 that was to be held on the village green. This was the first year that the Village Green was under the ‘ownership’ of Hannington Parish Council.</p>

<p>When approving payments for release, do those members signing cheques sign / initial individual invoices? Please provide a brief description of the approval process from receipt of invoice through to release of funds, on a separate sheet.</p>	<p>The position has not changed since 2014/15 except in the names of the Cllrs authorised to sign cheques following the May Elections 2015. Invoices are certified by the Clerk, unless there is a potential conflict of interest eg Clerk's salary, Clerk's expenses claim. Cheques are signed by two designated signatories i.e the Cllrs.</p> <p>Supporting paperwork (generally invoices) are always provided and checked by those signing the cheques. The cheques, supporting paperwork and the cheque stub being signed/initialed as evidence of approval.</p> <p>The Clerk is NOT a designated signatory.</p>
<p>Are <u>all individual</u> payments by direct debit, bankers' standing order or internet, if in use, similarly examined and approved for payment by members? Please provide detail of the controls in place over such payments, where different to those for cheque payments.</p>	<p>The Parish Council does not make any payments electronically. <u>December 2013 - Min 10d</u> <i>Electronic Payments – Cllrs noted the recent advice from HALC that Parish Councils could in future make electronic payments. However, Cllrs noted that the Council makes so few payments in a year and that the introduction of internal controls necessary to safeguard payments and to reduce risk of fraud would be disproportionate, and so agreed to continue to make payments by cheque</i></p>
<p>Does the Council / a nominated member review the detail of bank reconciliations routinely throughout the year and verify detail to underlying cashbooks and bank statements (Governance and Accountability Manual refers)? Electronic copies of the Financial Reports can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' by going to the Agenda papers for the Council meeting and accessing the specific Financial Report and the supporting papers.</p>	<p>The Parish Council makes very few payments in the year, enabling the Financial Statement and Bank Statement to double up as the 'cashbook'. At each of the FOUR meetings in the year, the Agenda includes a Financial Report. This FR is supported with a spreadsheet analysis of all payments made to date shown in each of the relevant four periods (together with a projection of any payments estimated still to be paid by the end of the year.) The statement includes opening and closing cash balances (actual to date and projected at year end). The Actual cash balance shown on the spreadsheet is reconciled to the extract of the bank statement for the period covered e.g. from Feb 2017 (prior year) through to date of Council meeting.</p>
<p>Please provide a brief description of the approach taken to the preparation and approval of the Annual Budget and Precept. Electronic copy of the Budget 2017-18 and for 2018-19 can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' by going to the Agenda papers for the relevant</p>	<p>Financial Statements comparing actual spend to date and planned spend for the remainder of the year against each of the subjective headings are presented by the Clerk to the PC at each meeting (see above). This statement is also summarised for the December – Budget Setting meeting where information showing: - i) actual spend compared with Budget spend for the previous year;</p>

<p>December Council meeting and accessing the specific report and supporting papers, and Minute... December 2017, Agenda Item 13.e.</p>	<p>ii) predicted spend compared with Budget for current year, and iii) DRAFT Budget for the next year is presented and discussed... Information received to date from the funding authority (BDBC) on their proposals for Precepts and Grants is also reported and considered. This process results in an agreed Budget for the following year, with the necessary Grant and Precept requests being formally approved by Council. The PC does not usually have any other Income source apart from the refund of VAT payments incurred in the previous year.</p>
<p>Does the Council formally consider and approve the level of reserves (General and Earmarked Funds) to be carried forward to the next financial year? (Such consideration should be minuted formally).</p> <p>An electronic copy of the specific decision of the Council regarding the level of the General Reserves, and the four Earmarked Reserves can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' by going to the Agenda papers for the relevant December Council meeting and accessing the specific report and supporting papers. The decision is recorded in the Minutes at para 13(e) (vii) for the Unadopted Roads and (viii) for the three further Earmarked Reserves. The supporting Financial Table in the Minutes shows that these actions would result in a General Reserve in the region of £5,000 for each of the four years ending 31st March 2017, 18, 19, and 20.</p>	<p>YES. The Budget Report 2017-18 was supported with projections for the next two years 2018-19 and 2019-20 to make a three year Medium Term Financial Strategy. This was then replicated in the Budget Report 2018-19 where the projections for the next two years 2019-20 and 2020-21 were reported. All the financial statements and Budget Forecasts include a projection of year end cash balances.</p> <p>To ensure the level of balances was given due consideration, when agreeing the Budget 2017-18 and the Precept for that year, the Clerk included a section in the Budget report entitled "Comment on level of balances" paras 10 – 13 drawing particular attention to the Parish Council should be aware of the Government's concerns regarding excessive increases when considering the level of precept it is going to submit to BDBC. During 2017-18 the Parish Council has identified a series of future expenditures that require the establishment of Earmarked Reserves. These cover the R&M of the Unadopted Roads at the village green, IT replacement, legal services and cover for Locum Clerk. The build up of these Reserves has been included in the Three Year Medium Term Financial strategy and in the Annual Budget.</p>
<p>Has a physical examination / verification of the Councils stock of assets been undertaken recently? If so, when and by whom?</p> <p>An electronic copy of the decision of the Council to dispose of three noticeboards can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire</p>	<p>YES. ALL Assets are in regular use and therefore scrutinized throughout the year. As a result there were two changes to the content of the Asset Register in Sept 2016 (Minute 19.b). A report was considered at the September 2017 meeting (Minute 15.b), where it was agreed that the three noticeboards at Ibworth,</p>

<p>website' by going to the Agenda papers Sept 2017 Minute reference 15.b.</p> <p>See also Agenda papers 20th March 2018 for Asset Register report year end 31st March 2018</p> <p>A copy of the Asset Register is accessible through the website by accessing Financials select year e.g. 2017-18 and scroll down to Section three Final Accounts</p>	<p>North Oakley and Cottington Hill were surplus to requirements. [These have been removed from the Asset Register.] Agreement was given for the noticeboard at North Oakley to be made available to Michaels Field should they want it. Some repair work is necessary to the remaining noticeboards at Hannington Village Green and at White Lane crossroads. The last new 'asset' was the purchase of IT equipment for the Clerk. These were included in the Asset Register in 2016-17 at cost.</p> <p>The latest version of the Asset Register will be reported to Council 20th March 2017, and will subsequently form part of the Final Accounts 2017/18</p>
<p>Do members consider formally whether these assets should be included on the Council's insurance schedule or be regarded as "self-insured"?</p> <p>An electronic copy of the Insurance Schedule can be accessed directly on the Hannington website.....by URL 'See: Hannington Parish Council, Hampshire website' By going to the Agenda papers 8th December 2017 item 12 .c. Attached at Appendix A is the Summary of Cover statement provided by BHIB/Aviva Insurance Ltd.</p>	<p>YES. The Parish Council has a comprehensive insurance policy based on a detailed asset register. Due to the withdrawal of the previous Insurance Company from local authority cover, the Council, through BHIB Insurance Brokers, entered into a new Insurance contract with Aviva Insurance Ltd. See Report to Council 8 December 2017 item 12.c.</p>
<p>Are asset values based on purchase cost net of VAT (where known)? Where detail of the purchase cost is unknown, asset values should be reported on the Annual Return at the same value as the previous year, except where new assets are acquired or disposed of.</p>	<p>The advice from the auditors 2013-14 was duly noted - see annual return for application of this accounting method. The value of the Wellhead was increased as at 31 March 2015 to allow for the costs (net of VAT) incurred in its rebuild. See comments made previously re the review of noticeboards and subsequent removal of three of the five.</p>

Certified by Chairman:

Date: 20th March 2018

Name in full: Simon Taylor

Note: re completion of the above.

- **The sections to the right marked in green have been completed by the Chairman.**
- **The sections on the left marked in red have been completed by the Clerk to provide direct reference to the relevant Council documentation i.e Agenda papers and/or Minutes, together with brief instructions as to how the documents can be accessed on the Hannington Parish Council public website. This also provides the internal auditors with the necessary access to the documents as part of the audit of the Final Accounts and supporting papers.**