WICKWAR PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL
Internal auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2023
Name of Auditor:

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

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
1.1	Have Standing Orders been a) tailored to council?	Y		

	b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted?	N	Advised to amend section 18 in line with the up to date Financial Regs Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Section 18 was updated in April 2022 May 2022 10.05.22
1.2	Have Financial Regulations been a) tailored to council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? (Objective B)	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Viewed section 4 Fin Regs 2019 May minutes 10.05.22
1.3	Does the council a) give grants? b) have a grant-awarding policy?	Y Y		Has a small grants and a Community grants policy
1.4	Have items/ services been competitively purchased in accordance with Financial and/or Procurement Regulations?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2 & 3	Town Hall refurbishment May minutes 26.5.22
1.5	Code of conduct reviewed in the last 2/3 years?	Y	Recommend that the minute fully reflects the actions such as not just Standing Orders and Financial regs but Code of Conduct Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Adopted May 2022 next review May 2023 Could not find Minute in May 2022. Clerk advised it was covered as part of minute 10/05/22 but not specifically mentioned

2. Finance

Ref	Test	Meets reqmts? Yes, No or N/A	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence
2.1	Has the General Power of Competence been adopted (e.g. a minute reference), if Council qualifies?	No	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
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 Y	Advise that section 137 payments are clearly identified in the accounts Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1 & 3	Section 137 limit noted in May minutes as £8149.68 May minute 15.05.22. Advised to include a separate section 137 cost centre. Accounting software for £5927.00 grants given. £3000 Wickwar youth club
2.3	Is there an annual council authorisation of Direct Debit list and Standing Orders? (Objective B)	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	May Minutes 17.05.22
2.4	Was Petty Cash expenditure	N		Clerk confirmed no petty cash

	approved, if any? (Objective F)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
2.5	Is all expenditure supported by VAT invoices, if applicable? (Objective B)	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Viewed a selection with transactions
2.6	VAT – a) recorded in accounts b) reclaimed? (Objective B)	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	2021/22 submitted 26/04/22 22/23 Clerk is processing now.

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)	Y Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	May minute 13.05.22 confirmed cover from June 2022
3.2	Copy of Risk Management policy a) adopted? b) reviewed annually by Council? (Objective C)	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Adopted and reviewed in March 2022 updated in May 2022

3.3	Asset register a) reviewed regularly? (Objective H) b) published on website? (Objective L)	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	May minute 12.05.22 Viewed online 11/05/23
3.4	Evidence that assets a) have been inspected for risk? b) reported in minutes? c) any actions undertaken? (Objective C)	Y Y Y	Recommend that the form is amended to show all assets on inspection and the minutes fully reflects what has been checked not just play area. This was recommend in 2022 but appears not to be actioned yet Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	The clerk advises that assets are checked monthly along with play area. The form attached only shows the play area. View December 2022 minutes and reports on assets are made 16.12/22 16.2.121.22
3.5	Evidence that internal controls a) take place? b) are documented? c) minuted? as per Council's Financial Regulations/Standing Orders (Objective B)	Y Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	September minutes 35.9.22
3.6	Bank reconciliations are on agenda to be considered by Council?	Y	Recommend that a copy is attached to the minutes or is available on the website	Viewed May and October 22 minutes ,

	(Objective I)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
3.7	Review of a) investments? b) bank mandates (signatories on bank accounts)? (Objective B/C)	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Done as part on bank reconciliation Changes to bank mandate minute 28.4.22 Review of signatories May 2023 Minute11 previously Oct 21 . Investments as part of bank account and consideration of a saving account in Minutes
3.8	If bank cards in use, are proper procedures in place? (Objective B)	No	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Clerk confirmed and checked bank statements
3.9	Are a) physical records secure? b) electronic records backed up?	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 5	Online records are on the laptop and regularly backed up to the cloud. All are password protected. The most recent paper files are stored at home with older files at the Town Hall in a locked cupboard. Older records are stored at Gloucester Archives

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?	Y	Recommend the budget is available as an attachment to the minutes or is on the website	January Minute 18.01.22

	b) adopted? c) minuted? (Objective D)	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
4.2	a) Were the earmarked objectives of the reserves identified in the budget, if any? b) Were the general reserves reasonable? (Objective D)	Y Y	Recommend that there is a clear minutes noting councillors have reviewed the reserves. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Reserves were reviewed as part of the budget setting process in January 2023 (minute 21.1.23). Copy of full budget document attached, there is a separate tab for reserves. Minute January 21.1.23. However, this minute refers to the budget setting for 2023/23. £184,843 ear marked reserve view report January 2023. Earmarked £63728 Cil £51846 £115,575.75 28,427 50% of Precept £54 960 ok as expenditure has large project
4.3	Was the precept demand for the year under review properly minuted in full council?	Y		January 2022 minute 19.01.22
4.4	Did the council a) regularly compare budget vs spend (as detailed in the financial regulations) b) and evidenced in	Y Y	Recommend that a clear minute is recorded as the clerk has suggested to show the current budget being reviewed.	The budget and budget monitoring report were reviewed as part of the budget setting process in January 2023 (minute 21.1.23) and the year-end budget monitoring report was reviewed in the April meeting (minute 23.4.23) Reports are also available when a Councillor checks a sample of invoices quarterly, but I haven't

	the minutes? (Objective D)		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	minuted that in enough detail, will do in future.
4.5	Are any significant variances from budget reported?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 2	In the budget report.

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?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Viewed in 2021/22 Clerk and Clock winder
5.2	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by Council? (Objective G)	N	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	Clerk has underpaid herself by .30p an hour Clerk should be on £14.40 but payslip showing £14.10
5.3	Has Council a) registered as an employer with HMRC? b) have PAYE / NIC been properly dealt with (including year-end procedures)? (Objective G)	Y		Viewed payments. PATA appointed for 2023
5.4	Are Councillor's allowances and	Y	2022 recommendation	The odd amount is reclaimed via expenses.

	expenses properly authorised & controlled, if any?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1 Recommend that the council adopts an expenses policy. Clerk needs to highlight when payments are being made if no original decision taken and confirm authorisation under Financial regs 4.1 Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	
5.5	Pension provision – eligible employees a) offered pension scheme? b) outcome minuted?	Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	January 2022 5.1b.22 This minute refers to the contract. Contract viewed online Minute confirms the contract Viewed in 2022
5.6	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)	 Y Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Auto renewal March 23 Viewed the document via Zoom

6. Year-end procedures

Ref	Test	Meets	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Evidence

		reqmts? Yes, No or N/A		
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)	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 1	June 2022 minutes 23.6.22
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 1 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 2 below)?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	June Minutes 25.06.22

6.5	Annual Statement of Accounts, section 2 of Annual Return, approved by whole council (with separate minute number from Section 1 above)?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	June Minutes 26.6.22
6.6	Are all sections of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return published on the website? (Objective L/N)	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	
6.7	Did council correctly provide for the exercise of public rights? (Objective M)	Y	Recommend that the dates for the period of exercise of public rights in 2021 are also reported to council and minuted. Annual Governance Statement Assertion 4	Scheduled for 1 extra day! Days minuted 28.6.22
6.8	Previous internal audit report reviewed by council and action taken where recommended?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7	June minutes 24.6.22
6.9	Previous external audit report (for councils with turnover over £25,000) reviewed by council and	Y		On website dated 29/09/22 October minute 26.10.22

	action taken where recommended?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 7	

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?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Adopted May 22 next review May 2023
7.2	Is the Council a Managing Trustee?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9	
7.3	Do trustees meet at least once a year and publish separate accounts? (Objective O)	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 9	Viewed details on website and discussed the advice from SLCC
7.4	Website Accessibility Statement on website home page?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Viewed online 11/05/23
7.5	Did council formally appoint GAPTC as the Internal	Y	Recommend that Council confirms that the Internal Auditor is competent and independent of Council when appointing them	February Minutes 7.2.22

	Auditor?		Annual Governance Statement Assertion 6	
7.6	Are registers up to date for council-owned burial grounds (if any) and purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burials certificate completed?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Viewed last 2 burials Laviona Vetoretti and Susan May

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)? (Objective L) c) initialled on each page and final page signed?	Y Y	Recommend that the action of Councillors is recorded if they declare an interest. E.g. Cllr Jones left the room for the vote ashe has declared a pecuniary interest Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Viewed February 2022 minutes Cllr Jones declared a pecuniary interest. At item 5.3.22 However not minuted if he left room.

8.2	List of members' a) responsibilities (Objective L) and b) interests held and published on the website?	N Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	No individual responsibilities listed
8.3	Agendas signed and displayed on website/noticeboards 3 clear days' prior to meeting? (Objective L)	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Meeting 10/05/23 posted on 4/05/23 took account of the bank holiday
8.4	Summons issued in proper format?	Y	Annual Governance Statement Assertion 3	Viewed on line 11/05/23

Expenditure.

Each item of expenditure should have a separate resolution not just be approved as a budget item.

The payment to Downed home heat has not been approved in the minutes. The minute reference June 2022
Minute 19.6.22 relates to a payment of £6759.00 to Wickwar Youth Club as a grant for the toilet refurbishment. Wickwar Youth Club should have appointed Downed Heat and not Wickwar PC in line with the minute resolution. There is no resolution to cover the additional amount on the invoice.

Clerks hourly rate for July 2022 is showing as £14.10 not £14.30 on the July payslip.

Recommendations
Recommend that the council reviews it Financial Regs and ensures that each item of expenditure is resolved.
Recommend that the council ensures its resolutions on expenditure reflects what it actually wants to do e;g issue a grant or appoint and pay a contractor.