

Annual Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Name of council:	Wicken Parish Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	John Marshall	Date of report:	03.05.21
Year ending:	31 March 2021	Date audit carried out:	03.05.21

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. It is important to note that managing the council's internal controls is a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and councillors and it would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and as a consequence of the legal distancing restrictions imposed by the UK government I carried out the audit remotely, by e-mail and 'phone. I would thank Valda Clapham, Clerk and RFO for her co-operation and assistance in delivering the audit; having the year-end data available so promptly at the end of what has been a very difficult year for clerks and councils, together with her quick response to my queries has been very helpful to me.

I firstly examined the publicly available information displayed on the council's website including the council's policies, procedures, agendas, minutes, financial and other records. I sought evidence that the previous year's Internal Audit report had been properly reported to and where necessary acted upon by the Council. I am pleased to report that the issues identified by me in last year's report have been fully addressed and the combined efforts of the diligent clerk and engaged councillors have resulted in a significant improvement in the council's performance this year with respect to governance and accountability.

I then examined the council's arrangements for the management and control of its business in the areas of bookkeeping, due process (ie compliance with the proper practices as set out in the Practitioners' Guide), risk management, budget setting and monitoring, payroll, asset register, bank reconciliations, internal control and year-end procedures and compliance with the display of information including the exercise of public rights.

I looked particularly at the arrangements that the council put in place in response to the C-19 restrictions, to manage the processes and procedures that would normally require documents including Minutes, invoices etc to be physically examined and / or signed. Where changes have been made, I am satisfied that the modified arrangements have been introduced without any significant diminution in the overall standard of internal controls.

Where necessary, I requested and was provided with supplementary evidence to enable

me to reach a conclusion regarding the enquiries I am required to make as set out in the AIAR. This supplementary information was provided in the form of written answers to the questions raised together with scanned documents including the Accounting Statements (section 2 of the AGAR) and the bank reconciliation.

I am therefore able to report that having tested all the aspects of the council's internal controls that I am required to consider, based on the information made available to me I am satisfied that in all significant respects, the internal control objectives were achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the council's needs. Accordingly, I have completed and signed off the Annual Internal Audit Report as required.

John Marshall
Internal Auditor to the Council
07505 139832
wjm.marshall1@gmail.com

The figures submitted in the Annual Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2020	Year ending 31 March 2021
1. Balances brought forward	17405	31069
2. Annual precept	7480	7700
3. Total other receipts	15595	16757
4. Staff costs	204	0
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. Total other payments	9207	23252
7. Balances carried forward	31069	32274
8. Total cash and investments	31069	32274
9. Total fixed assets and long term assets	54692	55545
10. Total borrowings	0	0

* The proper practices referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 are set out in *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, A Practitioners' Guide*. A copy of the current version of the guide is available for free download from this page:

<https://www.pkf-littlejohn.com/services-limited-assurance-regime-useful-documents-and-links>