Burton Green Parish Council

Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year ending 31st March 2026

The Accounts and Audit Arrangements introduced from 1st April 2002 (lighter touch audit) requires all Town and Parish Councils to implement an independent internal audit examination of their Accounts and Accounting processes annually. The Council have complied with the requirements in terms of independence by the Council decision making process by appointing Eleanor Choudry to undertake the work for 2025/26.

This visit is to check that the Parish Council adhere to the requirements set out in the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England ensuring that compliance is maintained. The audit concluded 18th April 2026.

An Internal Audit testing strategy is set out in the current Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England appendix 5. This covers a "suggested approach to internal audit testing" covering 10 aspects ranging from Proper bookkeeping right through to Year-end procedures. Our Internal Audit testing is based on this approach.

My initial discussion with the Parish Clerk established any system or procedure changes to the internal controls from the previous period. I have undertaken a series of independent audit tests using the various financial records, vouchers, documents, Minutes, insurance documentation to ascertain the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal controls.

As part of this internal audit review I checked:

Book Keeping

- The financial totals as at 31 March 2025 have been brought forward accurately.
- The cashbook is up to date.
- The calculations are correct.
- VAT is evidenced and has been reclaimed, this is minuted.
- The payments have been checked, and all were supported by invoices, authorised and minuted. (see page 4/5).
- Income recorded in the bank accounts was checked to those entries shown in the cashbook.
- The Council has the General Power of Competence therefore S137 expenditure does not need to be recorded separately.

Due Process

- Standing Orders were reviewed at the Annual Meeting and this was minuted.
- The new model Financial Regulations were reviewed and updated in April 2025 and this was minuted.
- There is no evidence of investments or loans.
- There is no evidence of grant income being received.
- A Grant Awarding Policy is available on the website.
- Grants totalling £4,440 have been paid.
- There is no evidence of rental income.
- A monthly Finance Report is produced evidencing payments, income and budget to date.

- Quarterly bank reconciliations are supplied to councillors at meetings and this is minuted. The ICC (Internal Controls Councillor) checks and signs both the reconciliations and bank statements.
- BGPC does not use Petty Cash.
- An Equality Policy is available on the website and was reviewed in October 2024.
- The Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Forms have been completed for all Cllrs and all Councillors details are available on the website.
- Agendas are displayed at least three clear days prior to a meeting. Agendas are available on the website.
- Each month receipts/payments and balances are summarised and supplied to each Councillor at the meetings.
- There is evidence that apologies are minuted.
- Declaration of members interests are minuted.
- Legal powers are identified in the minutes.
- BGPC complied with the AGAR publication requirements in 2024/25.
- BGPC have adopted a Financial Reserves Policy and hold General Reserves and Earmarked Reserves and this is reviewed at least annually. Reserves have increased significantly due to CIL funds. The Clerk advised that the parish council is holding an ideas workshop and a residents' online consultation to decide how to spend the money.

Risk Management

- A scan of the minutes does not reveal any unusual activity.
- An Annual Inspection of the play equipment was carried out by HAGS in February 2026.
- A Health and Safety Policy is available on the website and was reviewed in March 2026.
- A Lone Working Policy was adopted in March 2026 and a Working from Home Policy in February 2026, both are available on the website.
- There is no evidence of an Emergency Plan.
- Minutes are consistently signed. Pages are identified and run consecutively throughout the year. Minute references do not run consecutively across the year.
- Financial payment details are displayed on the website.
- Bank balances are regularly reported.
- The Risk Management Policy was reviewed in March 2026 and is available on the website.
- The Risk Assessment was updated in February 2026.
- Annual insurance is reviewed and is adequate. The policy is in the third year of a three-year deal expiring 01/04/26 and includes £10 million Public and Products Liability. The Clerk advised that quotes for renewal will be considered at the April 2026 meeting.
- The PC has an email address that belongs to the council and to which the council has access, this is a .gov.uk address. The Clerk advised that councillors now have individual .gov.uk email addresses.
- The Council publishes the information required by legislation, Publication Information, which details the information available and how it can be accessed.
- An IT Policy has been adopted. Websites must meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA and the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

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Budget

- An annual budget is prepared, discussed and adopted by the council.
- There is evidence that Burton Green PC have considered the level of the precept.
- The precept demand is approved and minuted, stating the amount requested.
- There is evidence of budget setting and earmarked reserves.

Payroll – Clerk/RFO

- A Contract of Employment is customised and signed.
- There is evidence that the PAYE/NI has been paid and approved.
- There is compliance with Minimum wage requirements.
- Employers Liability insurance of £5 million expires on 30/4/26.
- A Grievance Policy was reviewed in February 2026.
- A Disciplinary Policy was reviewed in February 2026.
- The Clerk/RFO's contract was reviewed in 24/25.

Asset Control

- An Asset Register is kept and is up to date with the value of individual assets at cost listed.

Bank Reconciliation

- There is evidence of a bank reconciliation.
- There is evidence that the bank reconciliations have been reviewed by Councillors and minuted.
- There does not appear to be any unexplained balancing entries in the reconciliation.

Banking and Investments

- The Council has 4 bank accounts:
  Unity Trust Bank:
  Current account ending XXXXXX15 for general reserves;
  Instant Access Account XXXXXX28 used for earmarked reserves;
  Lloyds Bank:
  Community Account ending XXXXXX60 for CIL funds;
  Community Instant Access Account ending XXXXXX60 Business Account.

Year End Procedures

- Year-end accounts are prepared correctly on a receipts and payments basis and the bank statements and ledger reconciled.

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Misc

- The LGA Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 was reviewed and is available on the website.
- The Clerk informed me that all electronic files are backed up to an external hard drive.
- Arrangements for public inspection of the Councils records in 2024/25 were made correctly.
- The Council is registered with ICO and this is paid by Direct Debit in January.
- BGPC reviewed their Data Protection Policy. The policy is on the website.
- A social media policy does not exist.

Last year's audits recommendations

The internal audit and external audit report recommended:

- Email addresses comply with new JPAG (Joint Practitioners Advisory Group) requirement.

  Email addresses are now compliant.

For the year 2025/2026 an audit trail of the following cheques was carried out:-

BACS	PAYEE	AMOUNT £
19/05/2025	Leicestershire Gardens	180.00
12/06/2025	H Du Bois	1,524.98
29/09/2025	HAGS UK	119,999.97
19/12/2025	Parkerwebb Home	330.00
19/01/2026	H Du Bois	207.25
12/02/2026	BGRA (Burton Green Residents Association)	4,000.00

Conclusion

It is my opinion that the various records and procedures in place for the Council provide a good standard of control.

This report should be noted and taken to the next meeting of the Parish Council to inform them of the Internal Audit work carried out. The details of this Internal Audit Report should be minuted by the Parish Council.

The responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with the law or regulations rests with the Council. The internal audit should not be relied upon to disclose all material misstatements or frauds, errors, or instances of non-compliance, as may exist.

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As the Councils appointed internal auditor, I confirm that I am independent of the Council.

I would like to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by the Parish Clerk during the internal audit review.

Eleanor Choudry, CiLCA, AAT, PIALC

Internal Auditor

18th April 2025