

KEDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Kedington Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its November/December Budget/Precept meeting. The December/January meeting of the Council approves the level of precept for the following financial year. Councillors involved in the Budget/Precept Meeting sign to state they are not in arrears (at least two months unpaid bills) with Council Tax.¹

Kedington Parish Council meets monthly (except August) during the financial year, unless decided otherwise at a prior meeting. Members of the Council monitor progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and carry out regular reviews of financial matters. The minutes of the meetings are circulated to all members of the Council. Bank reconciliation checks are carried out by the Parish Clerk/RFO and presented with budget sheet statements.

The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures. See attached report.

Clerk to the Council/Responsible Finance Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

¹ Local Government Finance Act 1992, s106

Payments:

All payments shall be effected by internet banking transfer, cheque or other instructions to the Council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of Council.

Cheques for payment drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two members of the Council in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil. Cheques for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a Council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the Council at the next convenient meeting.

Income:

All income is received and banked in the Parish Council's name in a timely manner and reported to the Council.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management:

The Council reviews its risk assessment annually in March, and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Internal Audit:

The Council appoints an independent and competent Internal Auditor who reports to the Council on an annual basis on the adequacy of it's:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management

External Audit:

The Council's External Auditors submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council, together with any issues arising (if any). Parishioners are given the opportunity to inspect the Council's documents and the Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return.²

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The results of that review must be considered by the Council, which should also approve the Statement of Internal Control.

² Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

A. Englar

Chair



Parish Clerk / RFO

Approved and adopted by Kedington Parish Council.

Meeting date: 18th March 2025

KEDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 aims to strengthen governance and accountability through requirements related to internal control and internal audit. Whilst the Parish Council has reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit (independence, competence, proportionate and scope), it has a requirement levied on it to ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control:

“The regulations require active participation by members in providing positive assurance to the electors of their stewardship of public money. The framework of accountability is risk-based i.e. level of control and management must be appropriate to the risk involved. The Council must determine the most appropriate method of internal control; care should be taken to ensure that internal control tests are proportionate and relevant and that they are neither seen as, nor intended as, undue interference in the RFO’s day to day management of financial affairs.”

As part of its internal control, the Kedington Parish Council has appointed a non-signatory Councillor to conduct a review of the system of internal control via the following tests on an annual basis with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council and minuted as received.

CONTROL TEST	TEST DONE Yes or no	COMMENTS
Ensuring an up to date Register of Assets	YES	Clerk/RFO updates as necessary during the year. Reviewed and adopted annually.
Regular maintenance arrangement for physical assets	YES	Street Furniture Condition Report identifies any faults/repairs needed
Annual review of risk and the adequacy of Insurance cover	YES	Clerk/RFO checks insurance cover
Annual review of financial risk	YES	Reviewed and adopted annually
Awareness of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders	YES	All Councillors have received these

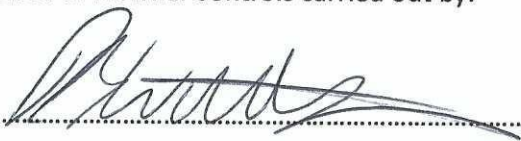
Adoption of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders	YES	Financial Regulations and Standing Orders reviewed and adopted annually/biannually
Regular reporting on performance by contractors	YES	Councillor(s) appointed to oversee certain contracts and report any problems to Council
Annual review of contracts (where appropriate)	YES	Contracts reviewed yearly or at appropriate time
Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed	YES	Clerk/RFO produces bank reconciliations and Councillors receive a copy for Parish Council meetings for review
Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure	YES	Clerk/RFO produces financial records including a payments and receipts list, the net position by cost centre and code report and the reserves balance report and Councillors receive copies of same for Parish Council meetings, including approved Regular Payments
Recording the precise powers under which expenditure is being approved	YES	Clerk/RFO records this on the Scribe accounting system and in the minutes
Payments supported by invoices	YES	Clerk/RFO records this on the Scribe accounting system
Regular scrutiny of income records to ensure income is correctly received, recorded and banked	YES	Clerk/RFO produces a payments and receipts list and Councillors receive a copy for Parish Council meetings
Scrutiny to ensure precept recorded in the cashbook agrees to District Council notification	YES	Minuted at Parish Council meeting
Contracts of employment for staff Contract annually reviewed	YES	Clerk/RFO reviews contracts annually. Minor changes do not require an updated contract i.e. change of hours and/or pay.
Updating records to record changes in relevant legislation	YES	Changes in relevant legislation is actioned and recorded in minutes
PAYE/NIC properly operated by the Council as an employer	YES	Clerk/RFO makes quarterly payments and reports amounts to Parish Council. Recorded in minutes.

VAT correctly accounted for, VAT payments identified, recorded and reclaimed in the cashbook	YES	VAT reclaimed quarterly by Clerk/RFO who reports amounts to Parish Council and recorded in minutes.
Regular financial reporting to Parish Council	YES	Clerk/RFO reports to Council at Parish Council meetings
Regular accounting statements are reported to Parish Council	YES	Councillors receive accounting statements at Parish Council meetings which clearly show up to date budget
Compliance with DCLG Guide <i>Open & Accountable Local Government 2014</i> , Part 4: Access to meetings and documents of parish and town councils (by members of the public).	YES	Minuted at Parish Council meeting
Compliance with Local Transparency Code Of 2015, Part 2: Publication of expenditure exceeding £500	YES	Clerk/RFO produces financial records including a payments and receipts list and Councillors receive copies of same for Parish Council meetings. Payments and receipts list published on Parish Council website.
Verifying that the Council is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements: Are the following in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit / Impact Assessment • Privacy Notices • Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests • Procedure for dealing with Data breaches • Data Retention & Disposal Policies 	YES	All adopted
Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept for safekeeping	YES	Produced and retained by Clerk/RFO
Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' Interests and Gifts of Hospitality	YES	Would be declared at meetings and minuted. Councillors requested to review at March meeting.
Compliance with Website Accessibility requirements	YES	Website administrator Councillor Ann Naylor

Adoption of Codes of Conduct for Members	YES	May 2024 and biannually thereafter.
Declaration of Acceptance of Office	YES	Signed by each new Councillor in presence of Clerk/RFO and copy sent to West Suffolk Council

Date of review of system of Internal Controls 14th March 2025

Review of system of Internal Controls carried out by: Councillor Dean Willett

Signature.....

Report submitted to Council: 18th March 2025 Minute reference: KPC 130-10

Additional comments by reviewer: