



STOKE ORCHARD & TREDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Internal auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2025
Name of Auditor: J. Shirley

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. Governance and Policies

Ref	Test	Yes, No or N/A	Evidence	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No
1	Have Financial Regulations been a) tailored to	Yes to all	a) & b) Financial Regulations on website c) 08/05/24 Full Council	There is a newer model version of Financial Regulations now available, recommend adopting the new version for 2025/26	Assertion 1

	council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? (Objective B)		minutes item 12c		
2	Have Standing Orders been a) tailored to council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted?	Yes to all	a) & b) Standing Orders on website b) 08/05/24 Full Council minutes item 12a		Assertion 1
3	Code of conduct reviewed in the last 2/3 years?	Yes	08/05/24 Full Council minutes item 12b		Assertion 3

2. Finance and Accounting

Ref	Test	Yes, No or N/A	Evidence	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No
4	Bank reconciliations are considered by Council? (Objective I)	Yes	Full Council meetings eg 04/04/24, 08/05/24, 04/09/24.		Assertion 2
5	VAT claims have been submitted and are up to date (objective E)	Yes	VAT Claim 31/03/24		Assertion 1

6	S137 a) is there a separate account for payments? b) are totals within statutory limits? (objective A)	N/A	General Power of Competence adopted		Assertions 1&3
7	Is there an annual council authorisation of Direct Debit list and Standing Orders? (Objective B)	No but	There are 2 Direct Debits which are noted with the monthly payments and shown in the minutes eg 03/07/24		Assertion 2
8	Cashbook provided and random sample checked. Give details at Annex A.	Yes	Cashbook, invoices, bank statements	Recommend Council provides the clerk with a debit/credit card for council purchases rather than the clerk using their own funds.	Assertion 2
9	Internal controls a) policy in place? b) evidence checks took place as per Council's Fin Regs/Standing Orders (Objective B)	Yes to all	Completed internal control checklist dated 10/03/25		Assertion 2
10	Was budget for 24-25 a) prepared? b) adopted by Full Council? c) Were the earmarked reserves identified?	a) Yes b) Yes c) Yes d) Yes e) Yes	a) Approved budget 2024-25 b) Full Council minutes 23/01/24 item 5 c) Reserves List d) Approx £35k in General Reserves, equates to about 12 months	Budget shows total reserve balance of £392,639.63 as at 31/03/24. Despite the high reserves the precept demand for 2024-25 was increased by 6.4%; Recommend including a commentary in the minutes to explain to readers the reason for the increase. Recommend there are separate minutes to approve the budget and approve the precept.	Assertion1

	<p>d) Were the general reserves reasonable? e) Was precept calculated and approved? (Objective D)</p>		<p>operating costs e) Yes</p>		
11	<p>Were end of year accounting statements a) prepared? b) match cashbook? c) supported by report?</p>	<p>a) Yes b) Yes c) Unknown</p>	<p>Cashbook 31/03/24 AGAR</p>		<p>Assertion 6</p>
12	<p>Did the council periodically compare budget vs spend (as detailed in the FRs)? (Objective D)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Full Council meetings eg 08/05/24, 04/09/24, 08/01/25</p>		<p>Assertion 1</p>
13	<p>Was Petty Cash expenditure a) Approved? b) supported by receipts? c) VAT accounted for? (Objective F)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No Petty Cash</p>		<p>Assertion 1</p>
14	<p>Was Insurance policy reviewed to ensure still fit for purpose? (Objective C)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Insurance Policy Full Council minutes 08/05/24 item 10e</p>		<p>Assertion 5</p>

	<i>Note Councils have not been asked to submit any information on burials. Auditor to check sample if appropriate.</i>	N/A			
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3. Payroll and Employment

Ref	Test	Yes, No or N/A	Evidence	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No
15	Do all staff have a NALC contract of employment? Copy seen by auditor? <i>Note to auditor checklist asks for 'clerical'. Use judgement if this is not appropriate</i>	No	Clerk contract of employment is based on NALC model		Assertion 3
16	Has Council's PAYE / NIC been properly dealt with (including year-end procedures)? P32 seen (if relevant)?	Yes	P32 January 2025		Assertion 3

	(Objective G)				
16a	<i>Note to auditor. Councils not required to provide evidence but check that Council has met pension obligations</i>	Yes	Confirmation of re-declaration of compliance dated 17/05/23		Assertion 2

4. Transparency and Public Rights

Ref	Test	Yes, No or N/A	Evidence	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No
17	Are all sections of the 23/24 AGAR published on the website? (Objective L/N)	Yes	AGAR on website	Recommend reviewing requirements of Short & Long Term Investments in Practitioner's Guide – paragraph 2.22. The investments with Redwood (2 year fixed) and Hampshire (5 year fixed) do not meet the criteria of short-term investment and therefore should be recorded in Box 9 of the AGAR and the figures for 2023/24 will need to be restated.	Assertion 3
18	Did council correctly provide for the exercise of public rights?	Yes	Public Rights Notice on website Public inspection dates minuted 12/06/24 item 4e		Assertion 4

	(Objective M)				
19	23/24 internal (and if relevant external) audit report/s reviewed by council and action taken where recommended? If relevant is exemption from external audit form on web site and correctly minuted?	Yes	Internal Audit: Full Council minutes 12/06/24 item 4b, External Audit: Full Council minutes 06/11/24 item 9d		Assertion 7

5. Additional information – if relevant

Ref	Test	Yes, No or N/A	Evidence	Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations	Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No
20	Has the General Power of Competence been adopted?	Yes	Full Council minutes 16/05/23 item 11		Assertion 3
21	Have assets a) been inspected for risk? b) any actions undertaken and recorded? (Objective C)	a) Yes b) Yes	Bus Shelter inspections 30/10/24 & 14/12/24 Community Centre maintenance visit report 18/09/24 Playground Annual	Recommend that items in the 2024 playground inspection report that were also in the 2023 report are prioritised for repair. Eg loose fixings on MUGA, refit basket swing chains.	Assertion 5

			<p>Inspection 2024 Heat Pump service April 2024 Full Council minutes 08/05/24 item 14</p>	<p>Recommend that a record of latest inspection date is noted against each asset eg on asset register, to ensure that inspections are up to date.</p>	
22	<p>Is asset register a) reviewed regularly? (Objective H) b) published on website? (Objective L)</p>	<p>a) Yes b) Yes</p>		<p>Recommend that the asset register is updated to include additional information. Section 5.58 of Practitioner’s Guide refers: <i>The asset register should contain in its most simple form the date of acquisition, cost of acquisition, useful life estimate and location along with value held for investments; however, it is desirable for the register to contain other such supplementary information to enable the user to better understand the nature and scope of the use of the fixed asset. It is therefore recommended to show insurance value, replacement value, custodian, date last physically vouched.</i></p>	<p>Assertion 5</p>
23	<p>Risk Management policy a) adopted? b) reviewed annually by Council? (Objective C)</p>	<p>a) Yes b) Yes</p>	<p>Asset Management Plan on website. Full Council minutes 08/05/24 item 12h</p>		<p>Assertion 5</p>
24	<p>Have items/ services been competitively purchased in accordance with Financial and/or Procurement Regulations?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Pump Track advertised on Contract Finder Public Open Space maintenance agreed 06/11/24 item 12</p>		<p>Assertion 2</p>

25	Is the Council a Managing Trustee? a)charity name b)charity number c) Copy of 23/24 AGM minutes seen (Objective O)	N/A	Not a Managing Trustee							Assertion 9
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Annex

Sample Checks

Expenditure

Ref no	Amount	Payee	Date of minute where expenditure originally approved	Date of approval of payment in Minutes	Payment date	Two signatures on cheque stub/two cllr authorisers for internet banking? Invoices initialled by signatories?	VAT	Power to spend? Yes or No	S.137?	Comments/Do they match Financial Regulations?
172	£5000	Orchard Stores	05/03/25	07/05/25	31/03/25	Yes	No	Yes	No	OK
167	£795+VAT	MJB Haulage	Clerk's delegated authority	07/05/25	31/03/25	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	OK
151	£979.63	Clerk	Contractual	05/03/25	21/02/25	Note: SCP24 is £17.79 per hour which is £1156.35 per month, not £1159.53.	No	Yes	No	OK
119	£990+VAT	Cleeve Garden Services	16/05/23	05/03/25	11/11/24	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	OK

94	£437.50	Stoke Orchard Community Centre	Unknown	06/11/24	19/09/24	Yes	No	Yes	No	OK
79	£225+VAT	Dewbar Fabrication	21/08/24	06/11/24	06/09/24	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	OK
61	£345.60+VAT	Scribe	Contractual	04/09/24	16/07/24	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	OK
39	£99.99+VAT	Screwfix	Clerk's delegated authority	03/07/24	17/06/24	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	OK
40	£332+VAT	Hydro International	06/04/24	03/07/24	17/06/24	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	OK
14	£12.99	Volunteer	Clerk's delegated authority	08/05/24	22/04/24	Yes	No	Yes	No	OK

Income

Reference	Name on invoice/name of payee	Amount	Promptly banked? Bank Statement (month)	Receipt minuted? Yes or No	Comments
24	Tewkesbury Borough Council	£1810.25	Paid by BACS	Yes – 08/01/25	
19	Redwood Bank	£6062.50	Paid by BACS	No	
10	CCLA	£541.54	Paid by BACS	No	