

# **DYMCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022-23**

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I am pleased to report to Members of the Parish Council that I have completed my internal audit of the Parish Council's records for 2022-23 and have been able to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report for the 2022-23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Members should be aware that the audit tests that I undertook during the audit cannot be relied on to identify the occasional omission or insignificant error, nor to disclose breaches of trust or statute, neglect or fraud which may have taken place and which it is the responsibility of the Members of the Council to guard against through the Parish Council's internal control procedures.

Members will be pleased to know that I did not find anything major in my financial audit to report and that I found the record keeping to be of a good standard and the Parish Council's approach to the management of risks to be sound. As a result of my audit and my discussions with your Clerk I was able to answer 'YES' to all the relevant questions contained in the Annual Internal Audit Report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank your Clerk for the assistance given to me in the conduct of the audit that took place on 24 April 2023.

### **PREVIOUS AUDITS:**

#### **External Audit Certificate 2021-22:**

The External Audit Certificate for 2021-22 dated 8 September 2022 was unqualified and without comment. This was reported to and considered by the Council on 3 October 2022.

#### **Internal Audit 2021-22:**

I have noted the report from my predecessor. One item raised was reporting in minutes of the budget and precept. I reviewed the minutes covering the 2023-24 budget and precept and have noted that the precept was not formally resolved. I have discussed with the Clerk that legislation requires that the budget is adopted and the precept set as part of one process although two resolutions are needed; one to record the adoption of the budget and the second to state the amount payable by the billing authority [refer s41 and s49A Local Government Finance Act 1992].

### **FINDINGS THIS VISIT:**

During the audit I carried out sufficient work to enable me to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report. I concentrated on the trail from the annual accounting statement back to the receipts & payments A/c and bank statements while testing a number of transactions to invoices or other supporting documentation. I have also reviewed the Council's minutes for compliance with legal obligations, its general functioning and for mutual consistency with the accounts.

I found the financial records to be accurate and up to date. All tests carried out were completed satisfactorily.

My predecessor had reported that with rising interest rates the Council may wish to consider alternative investments. Comparison of balances at year ends 31 March 2022 and 2023 indicates that the Council has not changed its accounts. Interest rates have continued to rise, such that 3.8% is now achievable (CCLA public deposit fund) and I reiterate the recommendation to look at alternative investments. The Council's balances are also high enough that the Practitioner's Guide recommends that an investment strategy be in place.

Both I and my predecessor have experienced difficulty in finding the budget on the Council's website. Budgets are included on the Information Commissioner's Office schedule of items that should be published. In addition it is difficult to understand the minute recording the adoption of the budget

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unless the reader can access the budget. I recommend that the budget be both attached to the minutes recording its adoption and published separately on the website.

I have nothing further to report.

**Lionel Robbins**  
**Independent Internal Auditor**  
**7 May 2023**