

Internal Audit Report for Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough Jt Parish Council's for the period ending 31 March 2023

Clerk	S C Blackburn
RFO (if different)	
Chairperson	Caroline Ellis
Precept	£ 7,410.33
Income	£ 12,039.70
Expenditure	£ 17,034.70
General reserves	£
Earmarked reserves	£9,466.02
Audit type	Annual
Auditor name	Linda Harley

Introduction

The primary objective of internal audit is to review, appraise and report upon the adequacy of internal control systems operating throughout the council. To achieve this SALC adopt a predominantly systems-based approach to audit.

The council's internal control system comprises the whole network of systems established within the council to provide reasonable assurance that the council's objectives will be achieved, with reference to:

- the effectiveness of operations
- the economic and efficient use of resources

- compliance with applicable policies, procedures, laws, and regulations
- the safeguarding of assets and interests from losses of all kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity, and corruption
- the integrity and reliability of information, accounts, and data

Methodology

When conducting the audit, the internal auditor may:

- conduct a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year in order to be able to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
- review the reliability and integrity of financial information and the means used to identify, measure, classify and report such information
- review the means of safeguarding assets and, as appropriate, verify the existence of such assets
- appraise the economy and efficiency with which resources are employed, identify opportunities to improve performance and recommend solutions to problems
- review the established systems to ensure compliance with those policies, procedures, laws, and regulations which could have a significant impact on operations, and determine whether the council complies
- review the operations and activities to ascertain whether results are consistent with objectives and whether they are being conducted as planned

Section 1 – proper bookkeeping		
The internal auditor will look at the methods and processes used to manage the council’s accounts and in particular that it provides clear data for reporting and monitoring purposes. This includes checking information is accurate, kept up to date, referenced and verified.		
Evidence		<i>Internal auditor commentary</i>
<i>Is the ledger maintained and up to date?</i>	Yes	The RFO has put in place effective procedures to accurately and promptly record all financial transactions. The Council’s ledger (computerised cash sheet) is well maintained and accurate. The ledger and the minutes clearly identify the spending power used for each item, evidencing the council is operating within its mandate.
<i>Is the cash book up to date and regularly verified?</i>	Yes	Up to date accounting records are maintained throughout the year and referenced which provides evidence to support the Council's underlying accounting statements.
<i>Is the arithmetic correct?</i>	Yes	Spot checks were made and were found to be correct.
Additional comments:		

Section 2 – Financial Regulation and Standing Orders		
The internal auditor will check the date the Council conducted its annual review of both Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and in particular check if these are based on NALC'S latest model which include legislative changes.		
Evidence		<i>Internal auditor commentary</i>
Have Standing Orders been adopted, up to date and reviewed annually?	Yes	The Council's Standing Orders, as seen on the website, were those reviewed at the meeting of 20/7/22 and are based on the Model Standing Orders produced by NALC in 2018. Comment: To bring their Standing Orders fully up to date Council may wish to: increase the procurement threshold from £25,000 to £30,000 to comply with the full requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 updated on 21/12/2022
Are Financial Regulations up to date and reviewed annually?	Yes	The Council's Financial Regulations, were reviewed at a meeting on 20/7/22 and are based on the Model Financial Regulations produced by NALC in 2019. Comment: To bring their Financial Regulations fully up to date Council may wish to increase the procurement threshold from £25,000 to £30,000 to comply with the full requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 updated on 21/12/2022 and update the figures relating to public contracts
Has the Council properly tailored the Financial Regulations?	Yes	The Council's Financial Regulations have been tailored to the Council.
Has the Council appointed a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)? ¹	Yes	In accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972(d) (financial administration), the Council has appointed a person to be responsible for the administration of their financial affairs. Council has noted that the Clerk is the Responsible Financial Officer in their Internal Control Statement. Comment: Council may wish to note in their minutes, the annual appointment of the Responsible Financial Officer.

¹ Section 151 Local Government Act 1972 (d)

Additional comments:

Section 3 – Payment controls		
The internal auditor will specifically check bank reconciliation including credit/debit cards and management approval processes and evidence that internal Financial Regulations (FO) are being followed. The internal auditor will examine how regular payments are managed and specifically seek evidence that these have been brought back to the Council for verification purposes especially where the actual payment made differs from the amount previously agreed. VAT should be clearly identified including evidence that claims have been correctly managed. The internal auditor will check if the Council has a clear understanding on eligibility in relation to the General Power of Competence and that s.137 has been correctly applied and managed.		
Evidence		<i>Internal auditor commentary</i>
Is there supporting paperwork for payments with appropriate authorisation?	Yes	The Council complies with its Financial Regulations and a sample of payments confirmed they were supported by invoices. At each full Council meeting a list of all payments is presented to the meeting with formal approval of such expenditure being shown in the minutes and evidence of such paperwork in the files submitted for internal audit. A sample taken shows that, the Council has the legal power to approve payments. The minutes of 15/2/23 show a payment of £360 for the removal of a dead tree in the churchyard. The chapel and burial ground at Sotterly is owned by the Parish Council. This being the case the works do not relate to the affairs of the church or an ecclesiastical charity and can therefore be paid under the LGA 1972 s.214. <i>Comment:</i> Had the Church yard been ‘closed’, with the responsibility passing to the Parish Council, by Order (of the Privy Council), then LGA 1972 s.215 applies.
Where applicable, are internet banking transactions properly recorded and approved?	N/A	The Council does not use internet banking.
Is VAT correctly identified, recorded, and claimed within time limits?	Yes	VAT is identified in the cash book. The claim for the period 1.4.22.to 31.3.23 in the sum of £1,427.22 was claimed for during the year under review. This agrees to supporting accounting records.

Has the Council adopted the General Power of Competence (GPOC) and is there evidence this is being applied correctly? ²	Yes	Council has adopted the General Power of Competence and this was noted in the minutes of 19.5.2021. Overall payments show that this power is being applied correctly. Comment: Relating to the payment to the church - Although the Council has the General Power of Competence, NALC's advice is that councils need to exercise prudence in making such payments as this course of action might not be legally valid.
Are payments under s.137 ³ separately recorded, minuted and is there evidence of direct benefit to electorate?	N/A	Council has adopted the General Power of Competence and therefore no payments will be made under LGA s137.
Where applicable, are payments of interest and principal sums in respect of loans paid in accordance with agreements?	N/A	The Council does not have any loans.
Additional comments:		

² Localism Act

³ Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act") enables local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory expenditure. The basic power is for a local council to spend money (subject to the statutory limit – of £8.41 per elector) on purposes for the direct benefit of its area, or part of its area, or all or some of its inhabitants.

Section 4 – Risk management	
The internal auditor will expect to find evidence of the management of risks from identification of what those are for each individual Council through to how these will be managed and the controls in place to mitigate these and that these have been approved by the Council.	
Evidence	
Internal auditor commentary	
<i>Is there evidence of risk assessment documentation?</i>	Yes The Risk Assessment Document for the period 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023 was considered at a meeting of the Parish Council on 20/7/22 and covers in general terms the matters which could possibly prevent a smaller relevant body from functioning. They have taken appropriate steps to manage those risks including the introduction of internal controls and external insurance cover. The Council has appropriate arrangements in place for the inspection of play areas. Comment: within its Risk Management Document, Council has identified a number of risks to property; finances and personnel and has taken steps to control the risk - all of which are clearly identified within the document as approved by Full Council.
<i>Is there evidence that risks are being identified and managed?</i>	Yes Council has a Financial Risk Assessment which identifies the risks associated with ensuring that public finances are adequately protected and managed and has taken steps to mitigate such risks. Comment: the documentation of the specific control procedures that have been adopted by the council for payments not only protects the RFO but also fulfils an internal control objective. The play area has been inspected annually by and it is noted in the minutes of 20/7/22 that a report has been received. Council has included in their risk assessment document that assets are regularly inspected.

<p><i>Does the Council have appropriate and adequate insurance cover in place for employment, public liability and fidelity guarantee and has been reviewed on an annual basis?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>General Insurance is in place under a BHIB Commercial Policy Schedule and shows core cover including Business Interruption, Public Liability and Employer’s Liability of £10m. Fidelity Guarantee Cover is £50,000 which is within the recommended guidelines of the Council’s balance at 31/3/23 + the annual precept. Council reviewed its current insurance cover at the meeting of 28/9/22.</p>
<p><i>Evidence that internal controls are documented and regularly reviewed⁴</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Council has shown that it has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective and includes effective arrangements for the management of risk. The Internal Control Document was reviewed on 20/7/22.</p>
<p><i>Evidence that a review of the effectiveness of internal audit was conducted during the year, including consideration of the independence and competence of the internal auditor prior to their appointment⁵</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The effectiveness of internal audit was discussed by full Council within the Internal Control Statement submitted and approved at a meeting of 20/7/22. Comment: By reviewing the terms of reference for internal audit, Council has followed guidance within the Governance and Accountability Guide and recognises that the internal audit’s function is to test and report to the authority on whether its specific system of internal control is adequate and working satisfactorily.</p>
<p>Additional comments:</p>		

⁴ Accounts and Audit Regulations

⁵ Practitioners Guide

Section 5 – Budgetary controls		
The internal auditor will seek verification that budgets are properly prepared, agreed and monitored. In particular they will look for evidence of good practice in that the key stages of the budgetary process have been followed		
Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
<i>Verify that budget has been properly prepared and agreed</i>	Yes	The budget for the year 2022/2023 in the sum of £11,715 was approved by full Council at a meeting of 17/11/21.
<i>Verify that the precept amount has been agreed in full Council and clearly minuted</i>	Yes	The full Council has considered, approved and adopted the annual precept for the year. This was set at £7,410 at the same meeting.
<i>Regular reporting of expenditure and variances from budget</i>	Yes	Comparisons between budgeted and actual income and expenditure is included within the documentation periodically circulated to Councillors in accordance with Council’s own Standing Orders. The minutes reflect that they have been received and noted.
<i>Reserves held – general and earmarked⁶</i>	Yes	Council’s final accounts show no general reserves with earmarked reserves in the sum of £9,466.02 and a non-earmarked reserve of £5136. Comment: The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a Smaller Authority’s General Reserve is that this should be maintained at between three (3) and twelve (12) months Net Revenue Expenditure. At the current level, council’s general reserves are not considered to be within this level.
Additional comments:		

⁶ In accordance with proper practices, the generally accepted minimum level of a Smaller Authority’s General Reserve is that this should be maintained at between three (3) and twelve (12) months of Net Revenue Expenditure

Section 6 – income controls		
The internal auditor will seek evidence to ensure income is correct managed – recorded, banked, and reported and test mechanisms used to achieve this.		
Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
<i>Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?</i>	Yes	Expected income was received, properly recorded and promptly banked. A number of items of income were cross checked against cash book and bank statements and found to be in order. Comment: in accordance with Proper Practices, the Responsible Financial Officer ensures that the accounting records contain entries from day to day of all sums of money received.
<i>Is income reported to full council?</i>	Yes	Council has noted in their Risk Assessment document that income is reported to Council at each meeting. This is included in the monthly bank reconciliations. Comment: Council may wish to include in the minutes a note of all income received during the audit year or append the bank reconciliations to the minutes.
<i>Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax Authority's notification?</i>	Yes	The precept amount of £7410.33 agrees with East Suffolk Council's notification.
<i>If appropriate, are CIL reporting schedules in accordance with the Regulations?⁷</i>	N/A	The Council has not received under funds under the CIL.
<i>Is CIL income reported to the council?</i>	N/A	
<i>Does unspent CIL income form part of earmarked reserves?</i>	N/A	
<i>Has an annual report been produced?</i>	N/A	
<i>Has it been published on the authority's website?</i>	N/A	
Additional comments:		

⁷ Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010

Section 7 – petty cash		
The Internal Auditor will seek evidence that the Council has followed its own policies, procedures, and verification processes and that these are up to date.		
Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
<i>Is petty cash in operation?</i>	N/A	The Council does not operate a system of petty cash.
<i>If appropriate, is there an adequate control system in place?</i>	N/A	
Additional comments:		

Section 8 – Payroll controls		
The Internal Auditor will check salaries were approved in accordance with PAYE, NI, Pension and that there is a clear understanding that the clerk is not self-employed. The Internal Auditor will also review how payroll is managed including evidence of approval of payslips.		
Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
<i>Do all employees have contracts of employment?</i>	Yes	Clerk/RFO has confirmed that a contract of employment is in place. Council noted the increase in the National Pay and this was noted in the minutes of 16/11/22. Council had 1 employee on its payroll at the period end of 31 st March 2023. Employment contracts were not reviewed during the internal audit, but all salary payments are authorised by full council. Comment: In accordance with Proper Practices, Council has ensured that the remuneration payable to all employees has been approved in advance by the Council.
<i>Has the Council approved salary paid?</i>	Yes	
<i>Minimum wage paid?</i>	Yes	
<i>Are arrangements in place for authorising of the payroll and payments to the council? Does this include a verification process for agreeing rates of pay to be applied?</i>	Yes	The Council has robust payroll arrangements in place which are outsourced to SALC. The payroll function is operated within the RTI system. Cross-checks were completed on two payments covering salary and PAYE and were found to be in order. There are suitable payroll arrangements in place which ensures the accuracy and legitimacy of payments of salaries and wages, and associated liabilities and as such the Council has complied with its duties under employment legislation. Copies of payslips for the year and the P60 were evidenced.
<i>Do salary payments include deductions for PAYE/NIC? Is PAYE/NIC paid promptly to HMRC?</i>	No	In accordance with Proper Practices, PAYE taxes and employee and employer National Insurance contributions (NIC) are calculated and recorded for every employee. However, deductions are not made for payments to HM Revenue and Customs but paid to the Clerk, who then makes the payment to HMRC. These payments are noted in the cashbook under the Clerk's salary. Recommendation : To allow for a full audit trail any payments to HMRC for PAYE and NICS should be deducted from the Clerk's salary and paid

		directly to HMRC by the Council, if applicable, on or before the dates prescribed.
<i>Is there evidence that the Council is aware of its pension responsibilities? Are pension payments in operation?⁸</i>	Yes	Inline with their pension responsibilities the Council has completed a declaration of compliance with regards to automatic enrolment duties in May 2020. This was registered with The Pensions Regulator. Council has confirmed the re-declaration in May 2023. Comment: Council may like to record an annual note of their pension responsibilities in the minutes.
<i>Are there any other payments (e.g.: expenses) and are these reasonable and approved by the Council?</i>	Yes	All payments seen are reasonable and approved by the Council.
Additional comments:		

Section 9 – Asset control		
The Internal Audit will be seeking to establish if there is a list of assets in accordance with proper practices including the date of acquisition, location, and value. This extends to checking policies (with evidence of review) and that the Council has applied the documented approach in practice. The Internal Auditor will check not only valuation processes but the existence of reserve budgets for depreciation and adequacy of insurance. A clear audit trail should be available when items are purchased including minutes to evidence approval.		
Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
<i>Does the Council maintain a register of material assets it owns and manage this in accordance with proper practices?⁹</i>	Yes	The Council's assets are properly maintained and efficiently managed. The Asset Register was reviewed during the Internal Audit for year-end and accurately reflects those items listed under insurance and within the Parish Council's remit for maintenance and ownership. It is noted that the declared value for all assets at year-end (31.03.2023) was £221,350 which agrees
<i>Is the value of the assets included? (Note value for insurance purposes may differ)</i>	Yes	

⁸ The Pension Regulator – [website click here](#)

⁹ Practitioners Guide

<i>Are records of deeds, articles, land registry title number available?</i>	N/A	<p>with box 9 of the AGAR. All assets have been stated as at the acquisition value and where assets have been gifted or where there is no known value have been given the proxy value of £1. The register has been updated with any additions or disposals during the year.</p> <p>Records of deeds, articles, land registry title number were not reviewed during the internal audit which was carried out via remote means</p>
<i>Is the asset register up to date and reviewed annually?</i>	Yes	A copy of the up to date asset register has been published on the Council's website.
<i>Cross checking of insurance cover</i>	Yes	The Council reviewed their insurance cover against the asset register and this was noted in the minutes of 22/9/2022.
<i>Additional comments:</i>		

Section 10 – bank reconciliation		
The internal auditor will seek to establish that the Council understands and can evidence good practice and internal control mechanisms in relation to bank reconciliation.		
Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
<i>Is bank reconciliation regularly completed and reconciled with the cash book and cover every account?</i>	Yes	Statements reconciling each of the Council’s bank accounts with it’s accounting records are prepared on a regular basis and reconcile with the cash sheets. They are subject to independent review by Councillors and signed as evidence of this review. Bank statements are periodically independently verified to the balances stated in the bank reconciliations. Comment: The RFO, as evidence of good financial practice, provides evidence of the bank reconciliations at each meeting to be verified by the Parish Council. This not only safeguards the Responsible Financial Officer but also fulfils an internal control objective – to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies.
<i>Do bank balances agree with bank statements?</i>	Yes	Bank balances agree with supporting period end statements and as at 31 st March 2023 stand at: £14,681.63 across all accounts held by the Council.
<i>Is there regular reporting of bank balances at Council meetings?</i>	Yes	Bank balances are included within the Bank Reconciliations approved by Council at each meeting. Comment: Council may wish to include the bank balances within the minutes or append the bank reconciliation to the minutes.

Section 11 – year end procedures		
Evidence		<i>Internal auditor commentary</i>
<i>Are appropriate accounting procedures used?</i>	Yes	Accounting statements prepared during the year are produced on a Receipts and Payments basis and agree to the cashbook. All were found to be in order.
<i>Financial trail from records to presented accounts</i>	Yes	Overall, there is a clear audit trail from the financial records held to the presented accounts. See comments under Section 8 relating to payments to HMRC.
<i>Has the appropriate end of year AGAR¹⁰ documents been completed?</i>	<i>Partly met</i>	As Council is a smaller authority with gross income and expenditure not exceeding £25,000 it has completed Part 2 of the AGAR. Part 1 of the AGAR, although uploaded to the SALC system has not been completed. As at 5/7/23 the AGAR and certificate of exemption for 2022/23 has not been signed. Recommendation: In line with proper practices the Council must approve Section 1, the Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, the Accounting Statements and both must be approved and published on the authority website before 1 July 2023.
<i>Did the Council meet the exemption criteria and correctly declare itself exempt?</i>	Yes	As the Parish Council had gross income and expenditure not exceeding £25,000 it was able to declare itself exempt from a limited assurance review. The Council approved the Certificate of Exemption at their meeting on 18/5/22, which was before the deadline of 30/6/2022.
<i>During the period in question did the small authority demonstrate that it correctly provided for the exercise of public right as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015?</i>	Yes	The Internal Auditor was able to confirm that the details of the arrangements for the exercise of public rights for the period ending 31 st March 2023 were on the public website used by the Council.

¹⁰ Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

<p><i>Have the publication requirements been met in accordance with the Regulations?¹¹</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Council has overall complied with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities and has published the following on a public website: Certificate of Exemption Annual Internal Audit Report of the AGAR Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the AGAR Section 2 – Accounting Statements of the AGAR Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2) Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 31st March 2023 (included within the Chair’s report) Comment: To be fully compliant the Council may wish to publish the analysis of variances form</p>
<p>Additional comments:</p>		
<p>Section 12 – internal audit The internal auditor will revisit weaknesses and recommendations previously identified to see if these have been addressed. They will also check if any changes introduced require further verification to ensure effectiveness of the corrective action taken.</p>		
<p>Evidence</p>		<p><i>Internal auditor commentary</i></p>
<p><i>Has the Council considered the previous internal audit report?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Internal Auditor’s Report for the year ending 31st March 2022 was considered and accepted at the meeting of the Parish Council on 18/5/22. 1 recommendation was made: 1. Secure email address</p>
<p><i>Has appropriate action been taken regarding the recommendations raised?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Action has been taken regarding the recommendation raised by the internal auditor.</p>
<p><i>Has the Council confirmed the appointment of an internal auditor?</i></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Council did not confirm the appointment of the internal auditor for this audit year. Comment: Council may wish to minute the annual appointment of the internal auditor.</p>

¹¹ Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Additional comments:

Section 13 – external audit for the period under review		
The internal auditor will revisit the external audit so that previous weaknesses and recommendations can be considered.		
Evidence		<i>Internal auditor commentary</i>
<i>Has the Council considered the previous external audit report?¹²</i>	<i>N/A</i>	Council declared themselves exempt from the external audit.
<i>Has appropriate action been taken regarding the comments raised?</i>	<i>N/A</i>	
Additional comments:		

¹² Regulation 20 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 – *following completion of an audit the Council should note that it is the Council as a whole (i.e., All members) and not a committee that should receive and consider the audit letter (including Annual Return and Certificate) from the local auditor as soon as reasonably practicable and the minutes should reflect that these have been received.*

Section 14 – additional information		
The internal auditor will look for additional evidence of good record keeping, compliance with data protection regulations, freedom of information and website accessibility regulations.		
Evidence		<i>Internal auditor commentary</i>
<i>Was the annual meeting held in accordance with legislation?</i> ¹³	No	The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council was held on 18/5/22. The first item on the agenda was not the election of the Chairman in accordance with the Local Government Act of 1972 Schedule 12, paragraph 7(2) and Schedule 15(2). Comment: Council may wish to note for their Annual Council Meeting that in accordance with the Local Government Act of 1972 Schedule 12, paragraph 7(2) and Schedule 15(2), the first item on the agenda should be the election of the Chair.
<i>Is there evidence that Minutes are administered in accordance with legislation?</i> ¹⁴	Yes	The minutes were not seen as a virtual audit was carried out. Full Council minutes clearly document the approval of the previous minutes and that they are duly signed. Absence was approved (if appropriate). Council has a page numbering system along with an area for each page to be signed and dated as a true record of the meeting held.
<i>Is there a list of members' interests held?</i>	<i>Partly met</i>	Evidence was seen on the website of East Suffolk Council for the Register of Interests for all current Parish Councillors, however, there is no access gained from the Council's website. Comment: Council is reminded that whilst the monitoring officer of the Authority must arrange for the parish council's register of members' interests to be available, where the parish council has its own website, its register of members' interests must also be published on that website. (Openness and transparency on personal interests - A guide for councillors – August 2012)
<i>Does the Council have any Trustee responsibilities and if so, are these clearly identified in a Trust Document?</i>	N/A	The Council does not have trustee responsibilities.

¹³ The Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12, paragraph 7 (2) and Schedule 15 (2)

¹⁴ Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Local Government Act 1972, and the Localism Act 2011

<p><i>Has the Transparency Code been correctly applied, and information published in accordance with current legislation?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller authorities (turnover not exceeding £25,000), Council has published the following information on a public website for the year 2022/23: Internal Audit Report – Council has published the Annual Internal Audit Report from the AGAR. Comment: It is good practice to publish the full Internal Audit Report on the website. List of Councillors and Responsibilities Items of Expenditure Above £100 including recoverable and non-recoverable VAT End of Year Accounts Annual Governance Statement Details of Public Land and Building assets / asset register and that Agendas of Meetings; Associated Papers and Minutes should be published in accordance with the prescribed timescales as set out in the Transparency code for smaller authorities – December 2014.</p>
<p><i>Has the Council registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)?¹⁵</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Data Controller. Under the data Protection Act 2018 and Registration ZA628283 refers.</p>
<p><i>Is the Council compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements?</i></p>	<p>Partly met</p>	<p>Council is aware of their responsibilities under the GDPR and has published the following documents on their website: Data Protection Policy Privacy Notice Document Retention Policy Comment: To be fully up to date with the GDPR Council may wish to adopt and publish a Subject Access Request & Subject Access Procedure Policy.</p>
<p><i>Has the Council published a website accessibility statement on their website in line with Regulations?¹⁶</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Council has published on its website a website accessibility statement – in line with Regulation 8 of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.</p>

¹⁵ Data Protection Act 2018

¹⁶ Website Accessibility Regulations 2018

<i>Does the council have official email addresses for correspondence?¹⁷</i>	Yes	In line with the Practitioners Guide, the Council has an official email address for correspondence clerk@shadingfield.suffolk.gov.uk
<i>Is there evidence that electronic files are backed up?</i>	Yes	Council has noted in their risk assessment document that regular backups are undertaken.
<i>Do terms of reference exist for all committees and is there evidence these are regularly reviewed?</i>	N/A	The Council does not have any committees.
Additional comments:		

Signed: *Linda Harley*

Date of Internal Audit Report: 5/7/2023

On behalf of Suffolk Association of Local Councils

¹⁷ Practitioners Guide