

**Associated Papers NPC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Agenda Item 2      Dispensations**

If there is an item on this agenda for which you have a pecuniary interest you will not be able to take part in any of the discussion or vote on a resolution. However, if you wish the council to consider your request for dispensation **you need to write to the Clerk ahead of the meeting** stating your reasons on why you should be given a dispensation.

**Agenda Item 5      Correspondence Circulated**

No correspondence has been received since the last meeting.

**Agenda Item 6      Clerk's Report**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Complete ✓</b>
14/109	SCC Highways are reviewing of hedge at Valley Road / A134 junction	
15/021	Valley Road markings and hedge at junction with A134 raised with SCC Highways.	
15/069	Update from Mr Wheldon regarding regulating change of use at barn.	
15/126	Arranging to meet S Scammel for quotation.	
15/132	Community Right to Bid application now formally withdrawn by NPC.	✓
15/143	Draft & Approved Minutes published on website and in newsletters.	✓
15/144	J Finch has arranged for NPC to have representatives at the next Chilton Woods Place Shaping Group meeting.	
15/147 a	Cheques distributed to suppliers.	✓
15/147 b	Invitation declined.	✓
15/147 d	Transparency Grant now received.	✓
15/148	Planning responses sent to BDC.	✓
15/149	Presentation placed on website and two developers updated.	✓
15/149	Meeting re Neighbourhood Plan being organised by Lee Parker.	
15/155	Christmas lights purchased.	✓
15/163	Draft & Approved Minutes published on website and in newsletters.	✓
15/165	Response sent to Planning Inspectorate.	✓
15/166	ACV application placed with BDC.	✓
	<b>Clerk Hours</b>	
	As at 3rd January 2016 - 252.75 hours worked / 240 hours paid.	

**Associated Papers NPC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Agenda Item 7a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Report**

**Receipts & Payments**

Date	Details	Ref	Power	Receipts	Payments
01/12/15	SCC P3 Scheme			103.80	0.00
07/12/15	Interest 7 Sept to 6 Dec	BS 273		2.01	0.00
11/12/15	Cash pay-in from Firework Night			962.35	0.00
13/01/16	PM Taylor - Christmas Parcels	1054	LA 2011 ss 1 to 8	0.00	100.00
21/12/16	SALC Transparency Grant			65.04	0.00

**Reconciliation**

Account	Statement Date	Statement Balance	Actual Balance	Unpresented Cheques	Credits not shown	Difference
Community Premium Accounts	31/12/15	£100.00				
	31/12/15	£16,352.25	£15,468.04	£984.21	£0.00	£0.00
Tracker Account	30/09/15	£11,103.26	£11,103.26	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Petty Cash	07/01/16	£0.00	£0.00			£0.00
		£27,555.51	£26,571.30	£984.21	£0.00	

**Statement of Accounts vs Budget**

	Budget	Actual		Reserves	Budget	Actual
Assets B/F		£21,270.15				
<b>Income</b>			<b>Expenditure</b>			
Precept	£9,282.64	£9,282.64	Clerks Salary		£3,705.91	£2,535.63
Grants	£200.00	£272.64	Admin	£818.00	£1,750.00	£1,423.83
Recycling	£400.00	£380.98	Grants		£700.00	£550.00
Other	£0.00	£2,201.17	Annual Subscriptions		£290.00	£257.00
Bank Interest	£10.00	£8.48	Street Lighting		£0.00	£0.00
VAT Repayment	£0.00	£397.71	Footpath Maintenance		£350.00	£300.00
			Insurance		£425.00	£296.31
			Inspection		£245.00	£234.00
			Maintenance		£1,820.00	£401.95
			Projects		£1,000.00	£892.65
			Other		£0.00	£159.00
			Village Hall		£0.00	£0.00
			VAT Paid		£0.00	£157.10
			Contingency		£500.00	£0.00
			Youth Council		£400.00	£35.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,892.64</b>	<b>£12,543.62</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£818.00</b>	<b>£11,185.91</b>	<b>£7,242.47</b>
			Assets Carried Forward			£26,571.30
<b>Total</b>		<b>£33,813.77</b>	<b>Total</b>			<b>£33,813.77</b>

**Associated Papers NPC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Agenda Item 7b Precept 2016 /2017**

At the November meeting you agreed a total expenditure budget of £11,207.85 for 2016 / 17 as follows:

	2014 / 15		2015 / 16			2016 / 17
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual to Date	To year end	Budget
<b>Income</b>						
Grants	200.00	507.60	200.00	272.64	<b>272.64</b>	207.00
Recycling	400.00	674.15	400.00	380.98	<b>700.00</b>	500.00
Other	0.00	2,063.90	0.00	2,201.17	<b>2,201.17</b>	0.00
Bank Interest	10.00	11.20	10.00	8.48	<b>15.00</b>	25.00
VAT Repayment	0.00	379.09	0.00	397.71	<b>397.71</b>	0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>610.00</b>	<b>3,635.94</b>	<b>610.00</b>	<b>3,260.98</b>	<b>3,586.52</b>	<b>732.00</b>
<b>Precept</b>		<b>9,067.02</b>			<b>9,282.64</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Clerks Salary	2,995.00	3,056.31	3,705.91	2,535.63	<b>3,705.91</b>	3,742.85
Admin	1,750.00	1,163.12	1,750.00	1,423.83	<b>2,500.00</b>	1,900.00
Grants	700.00	575.00	700.00	550.00	<b>700.00</b>	700.00
Annual Subscriptions	290.00	247.31	290.00	257.00	<b>257.00</b>	280.00
Footpath Maintenance	350.00	300.00	350.00	300.00	<b>300.00</b>	300.00
Insurance	425.00	399.11	425.00	296.31	<b>296.31</b>	320.00
Inspection	245.00	223.00	245.00	234.00	<b>234.00</b>	245.00
Maintenance	1,820.00	1,236.71	1,820.00	401.95	<b>1,820.00</b>	1,820.00
Projects	750.00	1,945.57	1,000.00	892.65	<b>1,000.00</b>	1,400.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	159.00	<b>159.00</b>	0.00
Village Hall	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	0.00
VAT Paid	0.00	397.71	0.00	157.10	<b>350.00</b>	0.00
Contingency	100.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	<b>500.00</b>	500.00
Youth Council	400.00	99.12	400.00	35.00		0.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,825.00</b>	<b>9,642.96</b>	<b>11,185.91</b>	<b>7,242.47</b>	<b>11,822.22</b>	<b>11,207.85</b>

**Reserves held by NPC**

With ageing bus shelters and play equipment it will not be long before a reasonable amount of money will be required for replacements. With this in mind it is proposed to increase the Asset Replacement reserve in line with the last 2 years but this may be the last time that the increase is this low. We still need to maintain a Legal Fees provision with regard to the enforcement of the Byelaws. With the reserve for the Election costs being £1,500 I do not see any reason, other than a by-election, for this to be topped up between now and 2017.

	2014 / 15		2015 / 16		2016 / 17	
	Start of year	End of year	Start of year	End of year	Start of year	End of year
Asset Replacement	7,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	10,000.00
Village Hall	500.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	2,000.00
Legal Fees	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Election Costs	1,250.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	1,500.00
QDJ Commemorative	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Speed Watch	50.00	465.00	465.00	465.00	465.00	292.61
Clerk Gratuity Fund	856.00	969.00	969.00	1,107.00	1,107.00	1,247.00
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>11,156.00</b>	<b>12,684.00</b>	<b>12,684.00</b>	<b>14,322.00</b>	<b>14,322.00</b>	<b>16,039.61</b>
General Reserves	7,054.15	8,586.15	8,586.15	7,995.09	7,995.09	?

**Associated Papers NPC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Precept for 2015 / 2016**

Barry Hunter, Babergh's Corporate Manager for Financial Services, has written to NPC regarding the Tax Base for 2016 / 2017 which will increase from **203.21** in 2015 / 16 to **205.36** in 2016 / 2017.

Using the projections for income, expenditure and earmarked reserves, NPC will also need to consider the level it wishes to maintain its General Reserves. Best practice would suggest that the level of General Reserves should be somewhere between 50 -100% of main income. The 3 examples I give below show:

Example 1     Increase the Precept to £9,380 thus keeping the Band D Council Tax at the 2015 / 16 level

Example 2     Increase the Precept to £9,880

Example 3     Increase the Precept to £10,380

	2014 / 15	2015 / 16	2016 / 17 Example 1	2016 / 17 Example 2	2016 / 17 Example 3
<b>START OF YEAR</b>					
Earmarked Reserves	11,156.00	12,684.00	14,322.00	14,322.00	14,322.00
General Reserves	7,054.15	8,586.15	7,995.09	7,995.09	7,995.09
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>18,210.15</b>	<b>21,270.15</b>	<b>22,317.09</b>	<b>22,317.09</b>	<b>22,317.09</b>
Income ex Precept	3,635.94	3,586.52	732.00	732.00	732.00
Precept	9,067.02	9,282.64	9,380.00	9,880.00	10,380.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>12,702.96</b>	<b>12,869.16</b>	<b>10,112.00</b>	<b>10,612.00</b>	<b>11,112.00</b>
Expenditure	9,642.96	£11,822.22	£11,207.85	£11,207.85	£11,207.85
<b>END OF YEAR</b>					
Earmarked Reserves	12,684.00	14,322.00	16,039.61	16,039.61	16,039.61
General Reserves	8,586.15	7,995.09	5,181.63	5,681.63	6,181.63
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>21,270.15</b>	<b>22,317.09</b>	<b>21,221.24</b>	<b>21,721.24</b>	<b>22,221.24</b>
<b>Tax Base</b>	198.49	<b>203.21</b>	205.36	205.36	205.36
<b>Band D Council Tax</b>	£45.68	<b>£45.68</b>	£45.68	£48.11	£50.55

The Council Tax that a Band D household in Newton pays is the Precept demanded by NPC divided by the Tax base for that year.

Finally, I would again recommend that the grant being given to NPC by BDC in relation to the Precept is not taken into account when resolving the Precept and is treated as an unbudgeted grant for 2016/17.

**Agenda Item 8      Sector Led Body for audit procurement**

I forwarded an email from SALC to you on the 24<sup>th</sup> November which outlined the plans for a Sector Led Body for audit procurement. NALC outlined the plans as follows:

“We are pleased to announce that we have set up a company to procure audit services on your behalf. This letter officially invites you to become an opted in authority to this scheme.

When the previous government abolished the Audit Commission, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) expressed concerns about the impact this would have on the workload of local authorities. We successfully persuaded the government to let us procure authority audit services, simplifying arrangements and reducing the burden on you.

We also successfully persuaded the government to fund the start-up costs of £540,000 which the sector otherwise would have had to raise itself.

This has been a real triumph for the sector resulting from good joint working between NALC, ADA and the SLCC.

The NALC website, [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk), will give further information, but at this stage you need do nothing unless you wish to opt out, set up your own independent audit panel and procure relevant services. If you do not wish to participate and will be making your own arrangements, you need to tell us by 31 January 2016.

**If you do not opt out you will automatically be included in the arrangement for the next five years.”**

Whilst there is very little detail on how the SLB will operate or NPC costs for the scheme, the work involved in the alternate arrangements, will in my opinion, place a far heavier burden on NPC in both resource time and invariably costs.

**Agenda Item 9a      B/13/01107 Rogers Farm**

I circulated the following summary of this application and subsequent appeal to councillors prior to Christmas.

“Prior to the November 2013 NPC meeting, councillors were invited to view the proposed solar farm from the applicant’s land and Mrs & Mr Wade’s land as neighbours.

The councillors reviewed the application at its November meeting and sent the following response:

**“Planning Application B/13/01107 Rogers Farm, Rogers Lane** - Change of use of agricultural land to use as solar farm for generation of electricity from solar energy together with associated works comprising solar panels mounted on frames, security fencing, inverters, transformers and a switch gear cabinet.

At the Newton Parish Council meeting held last night the councillors reviewed the above planning application. The councillors noted that there were no members of the public present for the discussion on the application. The councillors, having prior to the meeting visited the site of the proposed development and observed a neighbour’s issues from her land, reviewed the neighbour’s concerns against the planning application. After careful consideration of the issues, the councillors resolved unanimously to support the application.

Should Babergh District Council be minded to grant permission for the solar farm, NPC would ask that community investment funding for the residents of Newton be sought from the developer. This type of funding is very typical in wind farms where an annual amount of money is offered voluntarily by the developer over the operational life of the wind farm. The Bradwell Wind Farm<sup>i</sup> has created an £30,000 a year community investment fund for 20 years.

Solar farms do not normally have the same impact on communities as wind farms but there is, usually, some impact on the visual amenity of the area. There are two recent cases locally where community investment funding has been offered on the installation of the proposed solar farms:

- Little Braxted Parish Council, Essex was offered a one off payment of £30,000 by Lightsource Renewable Energy Ltd<sup>ii</sup>
- Mosscliff environmental, the developer of the proposed solar farm at Foxburrow Farm, Brightwell, Suffolk, is offering £20,000 in a Community Benefit Fund<sup>iii</sup>

The community in Newton has 3 ongoing projects that would benefit from community investment funding:

- Making the village hall more sustainable - the installation of solar panels would help towards this aim by reducing current electricity usage and generating a feed in tariff for the next 25 years
- Solar powered Vehicle Activated Signs for Newton’s 30mph zone
- Solar powered Christmas Lighting.

In NPC’s opinion these projects dovetail the solar farm in the technologies used, the lifespan of the projects and would enable the developer to have a sustainable impact upon the local community.

NPC, being an accredited Quality Council and being able to use the General Power of Competence, should be the recipient of the community investment funding so that the wishes of the community are implemented from any funding.

## Associated Papers NPC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016

<sup>1</sup> Bradwell Wind Farm Community Investment Package, Consultation Responses and Fund Launch, September 2013 - RWE npower renewables

<sup>1</sup> Section 7.11.1 Final Committee Report for Planning Application FUL/MAL/13/00036 Little Braxted - Maldon District Council

<sup>1</sup> Page 14 of Design & Access Statement submitted to Suffolk Coastal District Council for Planning Application DC/13/2252/FUL by Mosscliff environmental.”

Despite being recommended for approval by the Planning Officer, Babergh’s Planning Committee refused the application.

The applicants then appealed to the Secretary of State against the refusal. At an extra meeting of NPC on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014, in the presence of 25 members of public, the majority of which were residents, the councillors reviewed the applicant’s reasons for the appeal and the minute reads as follows:

### “14/084 Planning

- a. The councillors reviewed **APP/D3505/A/14/2218072 Appeal against refusal of Planning Application B/13/01107 - Rogers Farm, Rogers Lane** - Change of use of agricultural land to use as solar farm for generation of electricity from solar energy together with associated works comprising solar panels mounted on frames, security fencing, inverters, transformers and a switch gear cabinet as amended by revised plans received on 19 November 2013 including amended project layout plan, updated tree survey and root protection plan, additional information pack, construction access plans and hedgerow and tree impact report, cross section views from Church of St Mary the Virgin, amended plans of proposed structures. As further amended by agent’s submission of amended Construction Management Plan (received 2 December 2013) and amended Habitat Enhancement and Screening Plan (No.104 Rev.1) received 18 December 2013.

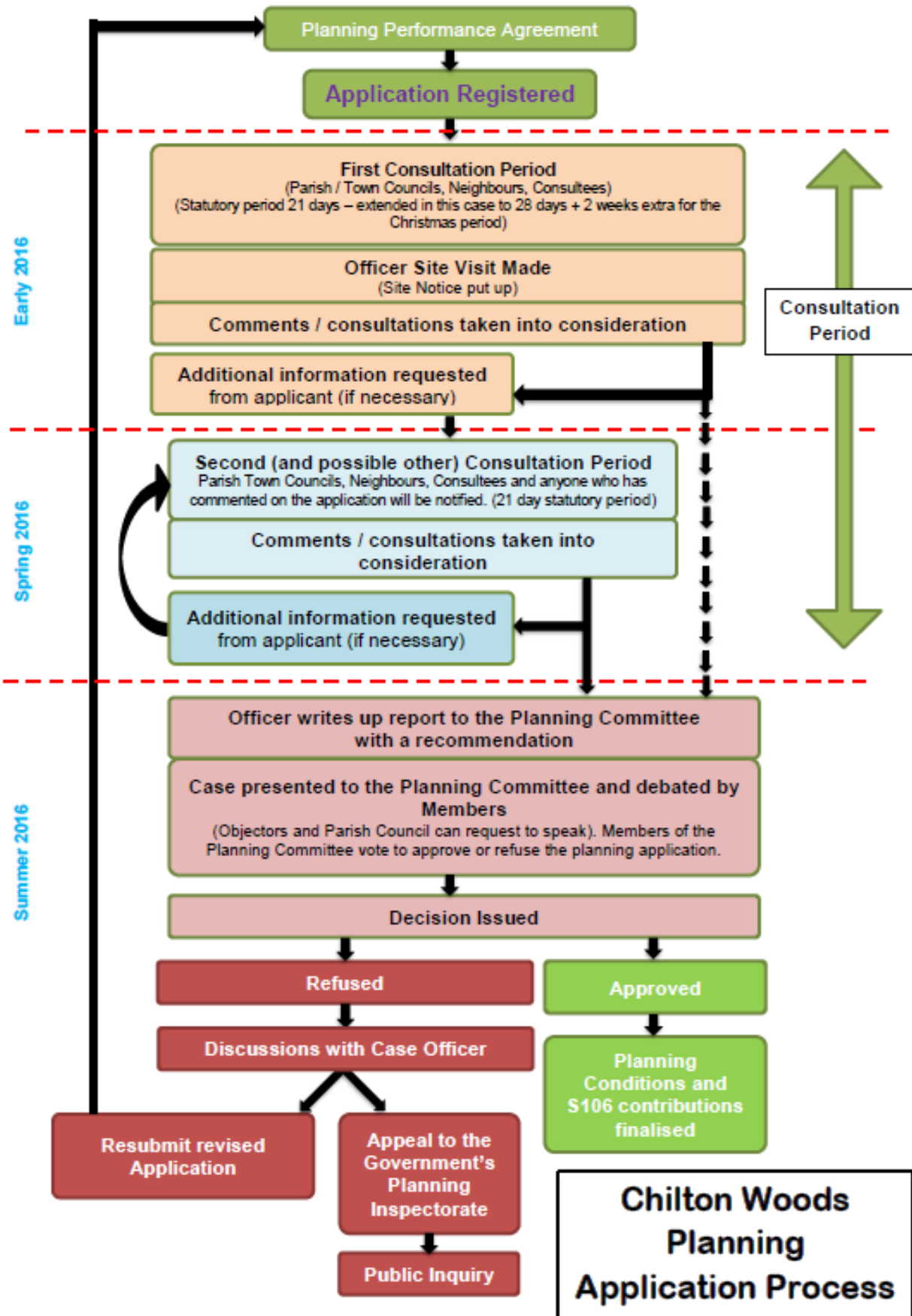
After listening to the opposition to the solar farm by residents the councillors resolved by a majority of 4 to 1 to withdraw their original support of the planning application and therefore could not support the appeal by the applicant.”

The appeal was subsequently refused by the Planning Inspectorate on a number of grounds. However, the applicant went to judicial review and the court quashed the appeal and the appeal is to be heard again.

NPC is again being asked whether it wishes to add to its previous submissions which the Planning Inspector will review as part of the appeal process.”

**Agenda Item 9c Chilton Woods**

With the publication of the outline planning application expected any day, subject to BDC validation, BDC has published the process for determining the application below:





**Agenda Item 9d      Planning Status**

BDC Ref	Application	NPC Ref	NPC Response	BDC Response
	Enforcement enquiry on the expected completion date of building works at Motts Farm.	12/118d		
B/15/00987	Rogers Farm, Rogers Lane - Replacement of existing decaying timber sole plate to front elevation.	15/109b	Support	Approved 12/11/2015
B/15/00178	Enforcement enquiry with regard to change of use on land west of Sudbury Garden Centre.			Ongoing.
B/15/01337	Whisper Wood, Sudbury Road - Proposed First Floor extension.	15/148a	Supported	Approved 13/11/2015
B/15/01080	Fairways, The Green - Proposed Change of Use of building from Use Class D1 to residential accommodation ancillary to Fairways.	15/148b	Supported	Approved 23/11/2015
APP/D3505/3 132478	Appeal against refusal of Planning Application B/15/00506 Woodean, Links View - Erection of 1 No. detached two-storey dwelling and formation of new vehicular access.	15/165a	Did not support appeal	

**Agenda Item 12      Effectiveness of Internal Controls and Internal Audit processes**

Under the Finance and Audit Regulations NPC has to carry out a review of its Internal Controls on at least an annual basis. The regulations require the Council to carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Internal Controls and to consider the findings of this review. In 2011 the need for a council to review its systems of internal audit was removed. However, as it appears to be a good process to undertaken annually, the current process is included for your review.

**Internal Auditors**

Heelis and Lodge were appointed as Internal Auditor at the NPC meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015 minute 15/065. The two partners of Heelis and Lodge have both worked for local Councils in the past and are completely independent from this Council.

The Internal Auditors produced a professional and helpful report for the 2014 / 2015 accounts which you accepted at the Parish Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015 minute 15/071a. Whilst Heelis & Lodge comply with the regulations covering the Internal Auditors, it would also appear that they meet the level of coverage required of a council of this size at a level of fee that would also appear appropriate.

**Internal Control processes**

The Parish Council accounts are produced on an excel spreadsheet. This file along with all other data files held on behalf of the Council are backed up using BT's Cloud.

All entries within the Receipts and Payments are supported by documentation that is referenced back to the excel spreadsheet. Each item of expenditure highlights the power used by Council and the minute where the expenditure was authorised. At the foot of each minute page it states that NPC adopted the General Power of Competence at its meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015. A list of receipts and payments to be authorised at each meeting are contained in the RFO Report.

The Council holds money at Barclays Bank and these balances are reconciled in the RFO Report for each scheduled meeting of the Council. A councillor also checks the bank account statements against the reconciliation report at each meeting. Three councillors, Parker, Schwenk and Taylor are the signatories for the Bank accounts and a minimum of 2 must authorise cheque payments.

The councillors are also given a Statement of Affairs vs Budget in the RFO Report for their review at each scheduled meeting. The annual budget proposal for 2015 / 2016 was reviewed at the NPC meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and the process and financial statements are included in the minutes. VAT recoverable is normally claimed after the last meeting of the financial year in March.

No Petty Cash is held by the Council and all cash / cheques received are deposited as soon as practicable after receipt.

**Associated Papers NPC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Agenda Item 13 Risk Management**

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Control Action</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>CP</b>	<b>CS</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Actions agreed 13/01/2016</b>
1	Inadequate forward planning and	1	5	Actual v Budget reviews	PC Meeting	1	3	Councillors	
				Budget Review	Annually				
2	Poor Reporting to Council, Record	2	3	Accurate Minutes	PC Meeting	1	3	Councillors	
				Timely and accurate financial reporting	PC Meeting				
				Regular project reports	PC Meeting				
				Internal Audit Review	Annually				
				External Audit Review	Annually				
3	Council operates Ultra Vires or does not comply with current legislation	2	5	Within Clerks Job Description	PC Meetings	1	5	Clerk & Councillors	
				Regular training for Councillors and Clerk					
4	Council lacks relevant skills	2	3	Regular training for Councillors and Clerk	6 monthly	1	3	Councillors	
				Create Committee & second skills required	As required				
5	Failure to respond to electors` right of access	1	2	Within Clerks Job Description	Annually	1	1	Councillors	
6	Lack of maintenance of council owned	3	5	Maintenance programme	PC Meeting	2	4	Councillors	
				External Risk Assessments of Playground and War Memorial	Tri-Annually				
				Walk of Parish to review condition of assets	6 monthly				
7	Damage to third party property or	3	5	Public Liability Insurance	Annually	2	4	Councillors	
				Playground inspections	Fortnightly				
				External Play Equipment Inspection	Annually				
				Walk of Parish to review	6 monthly				
8	Damage or loss to Council owned property	3	3	Asset Insurance cover	Annually	3	2	Councillors	
				Assets insured against Asset Register	Annually				
9	Failure to reclaim VAT paid by Council	1	2	RFO Report shows unclaimed VAT	PC Meeting	1	1	Councillors	
				VAT can be claimed back up to 3 years					
10	Clerk Fidelity	2	5	Insurance Cover	Annually	1	3	Councillors	
				Review Bank Statements against reconcilliation	PC Meeting				
11	Unexpected Loss of Clerk or Clerk`s	1	5	Up to date Job Description	Annually	1	4	Councillors	
				Copy of filing system index and data backup offsite	Daily				Computer data automatically backed up to Clerk's BT Cloud.

P = Probability S = Severity CP = Probability after Control Action CS = Severity after Control Action - Rating 1 = Low to 5 = High

