

**Recommendations from the 2024/2025 Interim Internal Audit  
Sandford St Martin Parish Council  
03.03.25**

<b>Annual Return Section</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Recommendations and actions</b>
A	Bookkeeping Arrangements	Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year and are well maintained with audit trails.	No further recommendations.
B	Council's Financial Regulations have been met with regard to expenditure	<p>The Council's Financial Regulations have been met in that appropriate authorisations have been given for each level of expenditure and they have been reviewed during 2024/2025.</p> <p>Payments were supported by invoices, and expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.</p>	No further recommendations.
B	Council's Standing Orders have been reviewed and updated (if necessary)	Standing Orders have been reviewed during 2024/2025.	No further recommendations.

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C	Review of Internal Controls	The Council does have adequate provision.	<p>No further recommendations.</p> <p>The Council to consider an accounts package, such as Scribe, for the Receipts and Payments and producing end of year accounts etc, which will assist the Clerk greatly in their role.</p> <p>The Council to consider increasing the number of Councillors as bank signatories, to reduce the risk of payments not being made if Councillors are unavailable.</p> <p>The Council to consider providing the Clerk with a debit card for small purchases with a set limit.</p>
C	Review of Risk Assessment	During 2024/2025, the Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives using their Risk Assessment.	No further recommendations.
D	Budgetary Controls (Precept requirement)	The annual Precept requirement resulted from a budgetary process.	When the budget is agreed, the receipts and payments be minuted, as well as the total budget figure.
D	Budgetary Controls (Budget monitoring)	Progress against the budget was monitored and minuted regularly.	No further recommendations.
D	Reserves were appropriate	The Council does have a Reserves Policy.	No further recommendations.
D	The final outturn is in line with expectations	The final outturn was materially in line with expectations.	No further recommendations.
E	Income controls	Expected income was fully received and properly recorded.	No further recommendations.
E	VAT	VAT had been appropriately	No further recommendations.

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		accounted for.	
F	Petty cash controls	Petty cash is not operated by the Council.	No further recommendations.
G	Payroll controls	Salaries to employees were paid in accordance with Council approvals.	No further recommendations.
H	Asset Controls - all material assets correctly recorded	The Asset Register has been published and uploaded onto the web site.	No further recommendations. Council could consider including photographs of assets in the Register.
H	Asset Controls - all additions and removals correctly recorded	Items been added but not removed.	No further recommendations.
H	Asset Controls - all Deeds and Titles established and shown on register?	Appropriate Deeds and Titles have been established.	No further recommendations.
H	Investment Registers	The Parish Council does not require an Investments Policy.	No further recommendations.
I	Bank Reconciliations	Periodic and year-end reconciliations were properly carried out.	No further recommendations.
J	Accounting Statements	The Accounting Statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis and were supported by an adequate audit trail.	No further recommendations.
K	Limited Assurance Review Exemption	The Council does meet the exemption criteria.	No further recommendations.
L	Information published on website	The information is available.	No further recommendations.
M	Exercise of Public Rights	The Parish Council published the exercise of public rights notice on	No further recommendations.

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		the website and noticeboard with the following dates: 3 June to 12 July 2024.	
N	AGAR publication Requirements	The Parish Council has complied with the publication requirements for the 2023/2024 AGAR.	No further recommendations.
O	Trust funds (If applicable) – the Council met its responsibilities as a trustee	The Parish Council does not operate as a trustee.	No further recommendations.

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**Transparency Compliance**

<b>Process</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Recommendations and actions</b>
Review of Internal audit action plan 2023/2024 has been considered and actioned?	Good Practice	The Internal Audit has been reviewed the previous year.	No further recommendations.
Accounting Statements agreed and reconciled to the Annual Return	Section 2 of the Annual Return is complete and accurate and reconciles to the statement of accounts.	Both reconcile.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	<b>Whilst the Parish does fall into the criteria for Councils below the £25k threshold, it is good practice to conform to the criteria and publish the items below.</b>		
Compliance with the Transparency Code	1) Expenditure over £100 is recorded on the Council website and with all information requirements	Available in the minutes.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	2) Annual Return published on the website	Available on the website.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	3) Explanation of significant variances	Available on the website	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	4) Explanation of difference between Box 7 & 8 if applicable	Available on the website	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	5) Annual Governance Statement recorded	Available on the website	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	6) Internal Audit Report Published	Available on the website	No further recommendations.

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<b>Process</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Recommendations and actions</b>
Compliance with the Transparency Code	7) A List of Councillors' responsibilities	Available on the website.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	8) Details of Public Land and Building Assets	Available on the website.	No further recommendations.
Compliance with the Transparency Code	9) Minutes & Agenda	Available on the website.	No further recommendations.

**Further Recommendations**

<b>Process</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Recommendations and actions</b>
Training	Regular training for Councillors and the Clerk	Clerks has attended regular training, but Councillors have not	Councillors should attend regular training offered by NALC & OALC.