Internal Audits
Parish and Town Auditing Services
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Susan McGeever
Clerk/RFO
Sampford Peverell Parish Council
Woodmans
Brithem Bottom
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Devon EX15 1NB

16th June 2026

Dear Susan,

END OF YEAR INTERNAL AUDIT 2025/26

Parish & Town Auditing Services have been appointed to undertake the internal audits at Sampford Peverell Parish Council. The annual internal audit for 2025/26 financial year was completed on 16th June 2026.

I can confirm that I am independent of the Parish Council.

As stated in the Letter of Engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete the internal audit section of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year. In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements. This will be undertaken by the Council's appointed External Auditor.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These controls are included in the following report.

Thank you for all the information you have provided to enable the audit to be undertaken.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Russell, Internal Auditor

INTERNAL AUDIT
Outlined below is an overview of the 10 Assertions within the Practitioners Guide 2025. Each of these are dealt with under the relevant Governance sections contained in Section 1 of the AGAR:

AGS Assertion 1 — Financial management and preparation of accounts
- Accounting Records and supporting documents:
- Bank reconciliation:
- Budget setting:
- Investments:
- Reserves:
- General Reserves:
- Earmarked and other reserves:

AGS Assertion 2 — Internal control
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations:
- Safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money:
- Employment:
- VAT
- Fixed assets and equipment:
- Loans and long-term liabilities:

AGS Assertion 3 — Compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices
- Acting with its powers:

AGS Assertion 4 — Exercise of public rights

AGS Assertion 5 — Risk management

AGS Assertion 6 — Internal audit

AGS Assertion 7 — Reports from auditors

AGS Assertion 8 — Significant events

AGS Assertion 9 — Trust funds (local councils only)

AGS Assertion 10 — Digital and data compliance

The following headings are based on Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement.

A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.

The Clerk to the Council has been appointed as RFO (LGA1972 s151). Clearly stated on the website.

The roll over figure is £23,459 (Box 7).

The Council maintains its accounts using the Scribe accounting software. A sample of the financial transactions between 1st April and 31st March 2026 has been undertaken. The following checks were carried out:

- A review of the invoices against payment reports and the bank statements;
- A review of the cashbook against the bank statements and invoices paid;
- A sample of Payments have been checked against the bank statements to verify accuracy;
- Expenditure incurred is appropriate.

There is a proper process in place to ensure that financial information is correctly recorded and reported to Council as part of its governance procedures. Procedures are included in the Financial Regulations.

The Council receives a financial report on a monthly basis outlining all financial matters. The report is included in the agenda supporting papers.

A list of invoices for payment is presented to Full Council for payment. Invoices are approved by two Councillors following authorisation. Ratification of payment is minuted in the Council minutes and payment is via online banking.

The Council has a Risk Management Register in place. **Recommend that this be uploaded onto the website.**

Bank reconciliations are prepared monthly, presented to Full Council as part of the agenda papers and signed off by Council.

There is appropriate segregation in place.

The year end bank reconciliation has been completed. This was referenced back to the bank statements. The final balance held by the Council amounts to £32,940.34 as at 31st March 2026

The Council has met this control objective.

B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

Tenders and Contracts are governed by Financial Regulations. All contracts being tendered should be published on the Parish Council's website as well as the Find a Tender portal where required. There is the facility on the Council website to publish and tenders and contracts.

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are based on recent versions of the NALC template and reference recent legislative changes. The limits between the two documents are consistent.

The following financial process is in place:

- The Clerk/RFO is responsible for financial transactions;
- Invoices are verified for accuracy on receipt and coded to the correct cost centre;
- Invoices are printed, filed and saved electronically;
- All payments are reported to Full Council for approval;
- Payments are authorised by Full Council and minuted;
- Clerk/RFO uploads payments onto the online banking app;
- All payments are authorised by two Councillors.

There is appropriate segregation in place.

Council has received two VAT claims during the year for £728.08 and £4,075.42. In addition, it has received £6,000 from the Village Hall in relation to VAT. A claim amounting to £678.86 has been submitted for 2025/26.

The Council does not have a debit card in place.

The Council does not have the General Power of Competence in place.

The Council has met this control objective.

C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

The Council has a Risk Management Policy in place which has been reviewed.

The Council is insured with Zurich. Policy number YLL-2720446633. Insurance runs from 1st June 2025 to 31st May 2026

A review of the insurance policy has been undertaken and Council is adequately insured. The policy includes Employers Liability (£10 million), Public Liability (£12 million) and Fidelity Guarantee (£250k).

The Council has adequate internal controls in place to ensure that it carries out its day-to-day business effectively and efficiently.

The Council has met this control objective.

D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.

The budget and precept were set by resolution at the Parish Council meeting on 17th November 2024. Minute 2025/26/038/8 refers.

Noted that a formal minute could not be identified within the minutes regarding the precept demand. **Recommend that both Budget and Precept be specific agenda items to improve transparency.**

It has been confirmed that a precept of £26,880 was requested. (MHCLG Parish Code E1133P043)

Budget monitoring is reviewed by Full Council on a regular basis and during budget setting.

The Council has set up Earmarked Reserves and these are recorded on the main cashbook spreadsheet.

The Council has adequate General Reserves available as recommended by SAPPP.
The Council had the following Bank Statement Balances as at 31st March 2026:

ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Unity Trust Current A/C	£1,759.67
Unity Trust Deposit A/C	£31,180.67
TOTAL	**£32,940.34**

The Council has met this control objective.

E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

Council's other income for 2025/26 included bank interest, newsletter income, rent income, grants and a refund. This is all correctly recorded within the accounts.

The Council has met this control objective.

F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.

The Council does not operate a petty cash system and did not receive any cash payments during the financial year.

The Council has met this control objective.

G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.

The Clerk has a contract of employment in place.

Member do not receive a members' allowance.

A sample of salaries has been checked and confirmed. Salaries paid during the year have been reviewed. Gross pay is calculated in accordance with the relevant NJC scale. Tax codes are included on the payslips and deductions properly calculated. Payroll is undertaken internally using the HMRC basic tools software. Pay slips provided and have been reviewed. It has been confirmed that tax is properly deducted.

National Insurance contributions have been deducted as required.

A test sample was undertaken and it was confirmed that the correct net pay was paid to the employee with tax and NI contributions correctly deducted and paid to the respective agencies.

The Council has met this control objective.

H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

An Asset Register is in place. Current value of the assets amounts to £69,262.47. The Register is maintained on a spreadsheet and it meets current requirements.

A comparison of the insurance schedule against the asset register has been undertaken. Council has adequate insurance cover in place.

The Council has met this control objective.

I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.

Bank reconciliations are prepared monthly and are signed off by Full Council.

The Council has met this control objective.

J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.

Accounts are maintained on a receipts and payments basis. Receipts and payments agree to the cash book and are supported by an adequate audit trail.

The Council has met this control objective.

K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered").

The Council certified itself as exempt at its Council meeting held on 16th June 2025.

The Council has met this control objective.

L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The following information should be published on the Parish Council's website under the Smaller Authorities Transparency Code (SI/SR Template)

Expenditure exceeding £100
Local authorities must publish details of each individual item of expenditure that exceeds £100. Published

End of year accounts
Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Published.

Annual governance statement
Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Published.

Internal audit report
Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Published.

List of councillor or member responsibilities
Annual publication of councillor or member responsibilities no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Published.

Location of public land and building assets
Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Parish councils and port health authorities to publish details of all public land and building assets – either in its full asset and liabilities register or as an edited version. Published as part of the asset register.

Minutes, agendas and papers of formal meetings
Publication of draft minutes from all formal meetings not later than one month after the meeting has taken place. Publication of meeting agendas and associated meeting papers not later than three clear days before the meeting to which they relate is taking place. Published.

The Council has met this control objective.

M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*

The publication requirements were met. The Notice states 23rd June to 1st August 2025. This meets the statutory 30 day requirement.

The Council did not formally minuted the dates of the public notice at the meeting where the AGAR was approved. **Recommend this be included in future.**

The Council has met this control objective.

N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR.

Publication Requirements Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, Authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage: Before 1 July 2025 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited: Published
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, approved and signed, page 4: Published
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25, approved and signed, page 5: Published

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report. Published.

The Council has met this control objective.

O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.

Council has a .gov.uk email addresses for the Clerk. Although Council does not have a .gov.uk domain it does meet best practice advice by having a .gov.uk domain for its website and email account.

The Council has adopted an IT policy as required.

The Council has an Accessibility Statement published on its website. Accessibility Statement – Sampford Peverell Parish Council

It has been confirmed that Sampford Peverell Parish Council website complies with WCAG 2.2 AA. It achieves 81% Scan Results — CompliaScan

Accessibility has been reviewed and the parish council section of the website scores 9.5 out of 10. WAVE Report of Sampford Peverell Parish Council – News and updates from Sampford Peverell Parish/Town/Community Council

Data Protection requirements:

- Data Protection Lead – Clerk is the DP Lead.
- Data Audit: Not in place.
- Training for staff and Councillors: Councillor and staff undertake relevant training during the year
- Data Protection Policy: In place
- Document Retention Policy: In place.
- Privacy Notice: Privacy Policy – Sampford Peverell Parish Council

- Both hard copy and electronic data have relevant protections in place.

A Freedom of Information Policy is in place.

Recommend that all relevant policies be uploaded onto the Council's website.

The Council has met this control objective.

P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.
The Council is not a sole trustee.