

General Comments

Financial records have been kept satisfactorily throughout the year and the end of year accounts have been prepared in a correct, concise and clear manner.

Risk assessments, financial regulations, standing orders are all in good order

Most of the recommendations made last year have been acted upon, although the report was not minuted as being accepted and recommendations agreed.

The required information needed to comply with the Transparency Code has been posted in a timely manner on the website, though the siting of some documents might be improved.

Recommendations

1. Clerk Salary

It is good that the clerk now has an agreed contract and salary

Clerk monthly payments need some sort of payslip to be stored within the finance paperwork to provide a record of correct payment.

While it is appropriate to pay these by standing order / direct debit if this is allowed within Financial Regulations, there should be a clear mandate for these payments. A sheet of paper outlining the regular payment and signed and dated by two councillors is suggested.

Also some procedure for either continuing the payments in the next year or changing them.

2. Fixed Assets need updating with values to correspond to the total in the Annual Return

There was a new seat bought in 2016 and another in 2017.

New purchases the also be added to insurance cover if required

3. Digital Transparency Fund

It is recommended that the Council puts in an application to the above fund for the purchase of a Council computer and scanner. The fund is entering its third and final year, so the opportunity will be lost if not taken now. A simple form is available from YLCA, which will cover costs of equipment, software and Clerk time.

4. Financial Regulations

These should be dated so that it is known when last reviewed / when next to be reviewed.

Care should be taken to follow the regulations or amend them to follow practice E.g. payment to Clerk quarterly / monthly? Similarly re Risk Assessment, Standing Orders etc

5. Internal Control System

There is no evidence of internal controls during the year, such as a Councillor checking invoices and minutes against cash book. Some of the signatures on invoices are those of the Clerk and a Councillor rather than 2 Councillors.

6. Evidence / explanation of income and payments

It is important that there is a paper trail for all transactions, so that it is obvious how much money has been received / paid out and what for. All papers regarding payments should be signed by 2 Councillors.

7. VAT needs to be accounted for in a separate column in the cashbook, so that the total amount to be reclaimed can be easily seen. Ideally the re-claim should be done within the same financial year.

