Longcot Parish Council
Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit 2026/2027 Meeting the Standards

Longcot Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standard and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk and for reviewing the effectiveness of internal audit.
The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Table 1 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Has the Standard been met?
Scope of Internal Audit.	The scope of audit work includes reference to the risk management processes and wider internal control. Terms of reference are set out in the letter of appointment of the internal auditor. Council to approve a new Internal Auditor as Lisa Wilkinson has carried out the internal audit for the past 3 years.	Yes
Independence.	Internal Auditor has direct access to the RFO and if necessary, the Chairman. The Internal Auditor does not have any other role within the Council.	Yes
Competence.	The Internal Audit report 2025/2026 was completed by Lisa Wilkinson on 13 May 2026 and received by Council at its meeting on 18 June 2026 minute 75/26 i.. Quarterly financial summaries are presented to Council. There is no evidence that internal audit work has not been carried out ethically, with integrity and objectivity.	Yes
Relationships.	Responsibilities are defined in the job description for the Clerk/RFO Responsible Officer (Clerk / RFO) is consulted on the internal audit plan and on the scope of each audit. (Evidence on audit files.) Responsibilities of RFO and internal audit are defined in relation to internal control, risk management and fraud and corruption matters. The responsibilities of Council members are understood; training of members is carried out as necessary.	Yes
Audit Planning and Reporting.	The Annual Return 2025/2026 was signed by the Internal Auditor on 13 May 2026. The Plan was appproved by Council 23 October 2025 minute 134/25. Internal Audit reports are carried out in accordance with the Plan and submitted to Council when completed.	Yes

Characteristics of 'Effectiveness'	Evidence of Achievement	Areas for development
Internal Audit Work	Planned internal work is based on risk assessment and designed to meet the Council's governance assurance needs. Financial statements and bank reconciliations are produced by RFO.	Reviewed each year

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	Accounts for inspection at quarterly Council meetings. An analysis of income and expenditure for setting the precept 2025/26 was produced for review by Council at its meeting 23 October 2025. Cheques and electronic payments are authorised, and cheque stubs initialled by two Councillors. Invoices are available for inspection when payment is authorised at Council meetings. Accounts are held on the computer and are backed up regularly.	
Understanding the organisation, needs and objectives.	The annual audit plan shows how audit work will provide assurance in relation to the Council’s annual governance statement.	Reviewed each year.
Being seen as a catalyst for change.	Any recommendations from the Internal Auditor for improvements is reported to Council for action. Keeping a good relationship with contractors and outside bodies. Continuous improvement is encouraged.	Internal auditor to check.
Be forward looking	When identifying risks and in formulating the Annual Audit Plan, changes on national agenda are considered. Internal audit maintains awareness of new developments in the services, risk management and corporate governance.	Adequate
Be challenging.	Internal audit focuses on risks and encourages members to develop their own responses to risks, rather than relying solely on audit recommendations. The aim of this is to encourage greater ownership of the control environment.	Adequate
Ensure the right resources are available.	Adequate resource is made available for internal audit to complete its work. Internal Auditor understands the body and the legal and corporate framework in which it operates. Access to a range of Council documents are available on the website. Finance for the internal audit is included under Audit Fees of the budget when setting the precept.	Adequate

Reviewed