

Annual Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with Section 4 of the Annual Return)

Name of council:	Oundle Town Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	John Marshall	Date of report:	20.05.2015
Year ending:	31 March 2015	Date audit carried out:	20.05.2015

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. Managing the council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the staff and management and not left for internal audit. This report is based on the evidence examined and made available to me. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of every record and transaction of the Council in order to detect error or fraud. Consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

I carried out the year-end audit of Oundle Town Council on 20 May; thanks are due to Debra Harper, Clerk to the Council and to Paul Smith, Finance Officer and Hanneke Soans, Estates Officer for their assistance.

BDO as External Auditor raised no audit issues last year; the 3 issues identified by me, relating to the updating of policies and procedures, display of the Members' Code of Conduct and reviewing cemetery charges have all been properly addressed by the Council. This year's Internal Audit was wide ranging and touched on all aspects of the management and delivery of the Council's business. Through the examination of hard evidence and questioning I tested all of the objectives of Internal Controls set out in Section 4 of the Annual Return and found them to be satisfactory. No audit issues worthy of reporting were identified but I would invite the Council to consider the following suggestions for changes to existing arrangements that if implemented, should result in either improved business resilience or enhanced delivery of services;

- the Council's current Standing Order 3 I conflicts with a recent change in legislation. Standing Orders should address and reflect the permission granted by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 that permits councillors and members of the public to photograph, film, broadcast and report on any meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being disrupted. It is important to note that broadcast includes live tweeting and similar forms of social media communication.
- the Council should identify which, if any of its land and / or property assets are currently not registered at the Land Registry and consider arranging for registration to take place. Experience has shown this to be a worthwhile and cost-effective measure for a Council to take, especially where boundaries are vague, assumed or poorly defined.

I am satisfied that the Council has effective policies, procedures and systems in place to manage, monitor, control and deliver its business going forward. The Council is well served by its knowledgeable and diligent staff and I am also satisfied that the governance arrangements remain fit for purpose. Accordingly, I have signed off the Return as required.

John Marshall
Internal Auditor to the Council
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The figures submitted in the Annual Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2014	Year ending 31 March 2015
1. Balances brought forward	462,971	975,504
2. Annual precept	302,549	330,400
3. Total other receipts	600,223	394,037
4. Staff costs	155,150	174,892
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	35,989	30,594
6. Total other payments	199,100	676,256
7. Balances carried forward	975,504	818,199
8. Total cash and investments	991,826	761,285
9. Total fixed assets and long term assets	1,629,808	1,449,810
10. Total borrowings	476,914	467,259

The 'proper practices' are those set out in the publication "Governance and Accountability, A Practitioners' Guide" available at <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/publications/803-governance-and-accountability-with-appendix/file>