



## **NEWPORT Parish Council**

# **INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM**

### **SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Newport Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, 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.

### **THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROLS**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk. It cannot provide an absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of control is based on an on-going process to identify the risks to achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

### **THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT**

The Council: -

- Has appointed a Chairman and Vice Chairman who are responsible for the smooth running of meetings.
- Approves budgets for the following year at its December meeting.
- The January meeting of the Council approves the level of Precept for the following financial year.
- Meets bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September and November with additional meetings as required.
- Monitors every month the expenditure against budget with a forecast for the end of the year using the Scribe accountancy software.
- Appoints and reviews the work of the Internal Auditor.
- Ensures that the Council holds relevant insurance cover.

The Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): -

- The Clerk/ RFO is responsible for administering the Council's finances.
- The Clerk is responsible for the day to day compliance with the law and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks.
- The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.
- Ensure that all VAT payments are identified and reclaimed.



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### Payments: -

- All payments are reported monthly to the Council for approval.
- An independent Cllr will review the payments and receipts monthly.
- The Chair of the Council will review the monthly bank reconciliation.
- Two members of the Council must authorise every cheque.

### Risk Assessments/ Risk Management: -

- The council carries out a risk assessment in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls.
- The Council has a risk assessment/management document which is reviewed annually.

### Internal Audit:

The council has appointed an Independent Internal Auditor who reports to the Council on the adequacy of its:-

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal controls
- Regulations
- Risk Management
- Reviews

The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually.

### External Audit:

- The Council's External auditors submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is reported by the Council.

### Standing Orders:-

- The Council has adopted Model Standing Orders as recommended by NALC. These are reviewed annually and amended as required throughout the year to reflect any amendments to legislation.
- These are available on the Council's website.



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Financial regulations:-

- The Council has adopted the Model Financial regulations as recommended by NALC. These are reviewed annually and amended as required throughout the year to reflect any amendments to legislation.

## REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of :-

- The Full Council
- The Parish Council Working Groups
- The independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's system of internal control
- The Council's External Auditors who makes the final check using the Annual Return and issues an annual audit report.
- The number of significant issues that are raised during the year. Any concerns about the effectiveness of the system of internal control are investigated and action taken as appropriate.

Adopted on 08.02.22 Minute Ref 2022 02 10 Review Date: February 2023

Reviewed by Newport Parish Council 07.02.23 Minute Ref 2023 02 09 with final update completed 14.03.23 Minute Ref 2023/03/09 following guidance from ERNLLCA – Update completed with regards to meeting frequency.

Original Text - Meets once every month (Except in August) with additional meetings as required.

Updated text - Meets bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September and November with additional meetings as required.

Reviewed by Newport Parish Council 12.03.24 Minute Ref 2024 03 09 - Precept setting is now finalised in January rather than December.

Reviewed by Newport Parish Council 11.03.25 Minute Ref 2025 03 09 – No changes proposed

Reviewed by Newport Parish Council 10.03.26 Minute Ref 2026 03 08 – No changes proposed