

## Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Name of council:	Belvoir Parish Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	Julie Moss	Date of report:	29/4/24
Year ending:	31 March 2024	Date audit carried out:	March/April 2024

*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 council through its staff and management and not left for internal audit. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.*

*The proper practices referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations are set out in JPAG Practitioners Guide. It is a guide to the accounting practices to be followed by local councils and it sets out the appropriate standard of financial reporting to be followed.*

***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:

This report was compiled in April 2024 and included inspection of:

- the council website
- documents and other information at a meeting with the Clerk to the Council, Jo Langford Yates.

I have examined council business, including policies, agendas and minutes, accounting and financial statements and other relevant documents needed to complete this audit.

There was one issue raised last year that has not been rectified. This relates to the previous year's Internal Audit report. Each year, the report must be presented to Parish Council at a meeting and the contents and the actions (if there are any) should be formally approved (not just noted).

Having reviewed the evidence and discussed processes with the Clerk I am satisfied that the vast majority of the council business is conducted in accordance with statutory requirements and sound financial practice. Many thanks to Jo for her detailed and helpful responses.

These are the areas where further action is recommended/required:

1. It was noted that Agendas do not have the date of issue on them. This makes it difficult to prove compliance with the three days notice required by law. The Clerk has already noted that the date should be included on all future Agendas.

2. It is recommended that the Agenda for the Annual Parish Council meeting follows the process as per your Standing Orders (see Section 6).
3. The annual budget and precept should be agreed by full council resolution and approved and the figures for both should be published in the minutes.
4. It was noted that the Clerk is being paid less than the National Minimum Wage (£11.44 from April 2024). This is not acceptable and I have provided the Clerk with a job evaluation tool that she can use to determine which pay point she should be on according to the National Association of Local Councils agreed payscale. The new pay rate should be approved by Parish Council and minuted in closed session as this information is personal between the Parish Council and the Clerk.
5. By law each decision made by the Parish Council should be noted in the minutes as approved. I have sent the Clerk a sheet of what Good Practice Minutes should look like.
6. It is recommended that after checking with the bank reconciliation that the bank balance matches, the Chairman initials the monthly bank statement as well as the bank reconciliation.
7. Under the Transparency Code for smaller Parish Councils draft minutes should be published on the website. Once the minutes have been formally approved at the next meeting the word 'draft' can be removed (as long as there are no amendments) in which case the revised minutes should replace the draft minutes.
8. Every Parish Council in LRALC area should have, and are advised to use, a .gov.uk domain name for their websites and email communications. Please use this link to find out more about the Parish Council Domains Helper Service [News | Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils \(leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk/news)

For more information please also see paragraphs 5.210 to 5.219 of the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioner's Guide published in March 2024 [file \(nalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.nalc.gov.uk)

This report is based on the evidence made available to me. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council in order to detect error or fraud. Consequently, the report is limited to those matters set out.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Moss FMAAT  
Internal Auditor to the Council

The figures submitted in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return are:

	<b>Year ending 31 March 2023</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2024</b>
1. Balances brought forward	2165	4923
2. Annual precept	19000	19000
3. Total other receipts	2076	1835
4. Staff costs	5092	4947
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. Total other payments	13227	16816
7. Balances carried forward	4922	3995
8. Total cash and investments	4922	3995
9. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	57000	57000
10. Total borrowings	0	0