

HEELIS&LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

Internal Audit Report for Westhall Parish Council – 2024/2025

The following Internal Audit was carried out on the adequacy of systems of control in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 and the guidance and instruction in the Practitioners Guide 2024. The following recommendations/comments have been made:

Income: £4,716.50 Expenditure: £3,895.87 Reserves: £9,823.70

2025 AGAR Completion:

Section One: [Yes – approved by council](#)

Section Two: [Yes – approved by council](#)

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025: [Yes](#)

Certificate of Exemption: [Yes](#)

Proper book-keeping Cash Book, regular reconciliation of books and bank statements. Supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts

All were found to be in order. LGAs137 (grants) and VAT payments are tracked and identified within the year end accounts. It is noted that there was no LGAs137 expenditure during the year.

The cashbook is referenced providing a clear audit trail. Supporting paperwork is in place and well referenced.

Financial regulations Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
Tenders
Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes
Identifying VAT payments and reclamation
Cheque books, paying in books and other relevant documents

Standing Orders in place: [Yes](#)
Reviewed: [13/5/2024 \(Ref: 0326 - 9\)](#)
Financial Regulations in place: [Yes](#)
Reviewed: [8/7/2024 \(Ref: 0327 - 10\)](#)

VAT reclaimed during the year: [Yes](#)
Registered: [No](#)

General Power of Competence: [No](#)

There were no tenders during the year that exceeded the £30,000 Public Contract Regulations threshold.

Risk Assessment

Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council
Compliance with Data Protection regulations

Risk Assessment document in place: Yes

Data Protection registration: Yes Ref: ZA218208

Privacy Policy published: Yes

Link: <https://westhallparishcouncil.gov.uk/assets/Parish-Council/Parish-Council-Governance-Documents/PARISH-COUNCIL-PRIVACY-POLICY.pdf>

Insurance was in place for the year of audit (valid 1/10/2024 – 30/9/2025), with a review being undertaken on 9/9/2024 (Ref: 7.c). The Risk Assessment and Internal Controls were reviewed at a meeting held on 10/3/2025 (Ref: 0331 - 13).

Statement of Internal Controls in place: Yes

The Council have good internal financial controls in place. The Clerk provides financial reports to council meetings. Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.

Fidelity Cover: £250,000

The level of Fidelity cover is within the recommended guidelines of year end balances plus 50% of the precept.

Transparency

Under the **Transparency code for smaller authorities**, smaller councils with income/expenditure under £25,000 should publish on their website from 1 April 2015:

Smaller Council: Yes

Website: <https://westhallparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

- a) all items of expenditure above £100
Published – Yes – contained within the minutes
- b) annual governance statement (By 1 July)
2024 Annual Return, Section One Published – Yes
- c) end of year accounts (By 1 July)
2024 Annual Return, Section Two Published – Yes
- d) internal audit report (By 1 July)
2024 Annual Return, Section Four Published – Yes
- e) list of councillor or member responsibilities
Published – Yes
- f) the details of public land and building assets (By 1 July)
Published – The Council do not own any land or buildings

g) minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings
Published – Yes

The Council have met the requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller councils.

Under **The Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 9(6 & 7)** a smaller council having certified itself as an Exempt Authority must publish on their website:

Certificate of Exemption
Certificate of Exemption Published - Yes

Under **The Accounts & Audit Regulations** councils must publish on their website:

Notice of period for the exercise of public rights
Published – Yes

Period of Exercise of Public Rights

Publication Date: 29/5/2024 Start Date: 3/6/2024 End Date: 14/7/2024

Under the requirements of the **Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 13(2b)** council are required to display AGARs for the five years 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 on their website.

The Council have met the publication requirements.

Budgetary controls supporting documents

Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and

Precept: £4,200 (2025-2026)	Date: 13/1/2025 (Ref: 9.c)
Precept: £4,100 (2024-2025)	Date: 8/1/2024 (Ref: 0322 – 6))

Good budgetary procedures are in place. The precept was agreed in full council and the precept decision and amount has been clearly minuted. The Clerk ensures the council are aware of responsibilities, commitments, forward planning and the need for adequate reserves. Budget papers are prepared to ensure councillors have sufficient information to make informed decisions. Budgets are monitored during the year.

Income controls

Precept and other income, including credit control mechanisms

All were found to be in order. Income controls were checked and a sample of income received and banked cross referenced with the Cash Book and bank statements.

Petty Cash

Associated books and established system in place

A satisfactory expenses system is in place with supporting paperwork. No Petty Cash held.

Payroll controls

PAYE and NIC in place where necessary.
Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures
Records relating to contracts of employment and pensions

PAYE System in place: **Yes**
Employer's Reference: **120/YE47220**
P60s issued: **Yes**

The Council continue to operate RTI in accordance with HMRC regulations. Payroll is outsourced. Supporting paperwork is in place and a P60 has been produced as part of the year end process.

The Council have completed their re-declaration of compliance with the Pensions Regulator.

It is noted that the Council undertook a review of salaries at a meeting held on 11/11/2024 (Ref: 0329 – 8.f). The Clerk's contract was reviewed on 13/1/2025 (Ref; 9.d)

Asset control

Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets
Cross checking on insurance cover

A separate asset register is in place. An annual inspection of assets has been undertaken (Ref: 11/11/2024 – 11). Values are recorded at cost value. The total value of assets are recorded at £10,461. The figure in the asset register corresponds with the figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR.

Bank Reconciliation

Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements

All were in order. Bank Reconciliations are carried out regularly. The bank statements reconciled with the end of year accounts and bank reconciliations for all accounts.

Bank Balances at 31 March were confirmed as:

<i>Barclays Current</i>	<i>xxxx5760</i>	<i>£9,822.70</i>
<i>Barclays BP #2</i>	<i>xxxx2656</i>	<i>£1.00</i>

The Council had no outstanding loans at the year end.

Reserves

General Reserves are reasonable for the activities of the Council
Earmarked Reserves are identified

The Council have adequate reserves at the year end (£9,823.74).

Year-end procedures Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents
Verifying sample payments and income
Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate.

End of year accounts are prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis.

Sole Trustee The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee

The Council is a Trustee of the Recreation Ground Charity.

Charity Number: 304833

Income: £782 Expenditure: £375

The last annual submission of the accounts was 16/1/2025 for the 2024 accounts.

It is noted that the Charity bank account is in the name of Westhall Parish Council and that the trustee is not named as the sole trustee of the charity on the Charity Commission website, instead individual councillors are named as trustees.

Recommendation: *As sole trustee of a charity, it is recommended that the council change the name of the Charity bank account to the Charity Name and register the Parish Council as the sole trustee with the Charity Commission.*

Internal Audit Procedures

The 2024 Internal Audit report was considered by the Council at a meeting held on 8/7/2024 (Ref: 0327 – 6.c).

A review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was carried out on 8/7/2024 (Ref: 0327 – 6.c).

Heelis & Lodge were appointed as Internal Auditor at a meeting held on 10/3/2024 (Ref: 0331 – 9.c).

External Audit

The Council formally approved the 2024 AGAR at a meeting of the full Council held on 13/5/2024 (Ref: 10. c, d & f).

The Council declared themselves Exempt from External audit for the 2023-2024 financial year (Ref: 13/5/2024 – 326).

Additional Comments/Recommendations

- The Annual Parish Council meeting was held on 13/5/2024. The first item of business was the Election of Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- There are no additional comments/recommendations to make in relation to this audit.
- I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for their assistance during the course of the audit work and the quality of documentation provided for the audit.



Heather Heelis
Heelis & Lodge
25 June 2025

HEELIS&LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

www.heelisandlodge.co.uk

INVOICE

To:

Westhall Parish Council

Invoice No: HL9617
Date: 25 June 2025

Details	Quantity	Amount (£)	Total (£)
To carry out Internal Audit for the year ended 31 March 2025 (Under £5,000 banding)	1	85.00	85.00
Total			85.00

Please make cheques payable to: Heelis & Lodge

Bank Details: Account 02539349 **Sort Code 09-01-50**

NB Change to bank account details

Terms 14 Days

Thank you.

HEELIS&LODGE

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