INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

TO

BERKSWELL
PARISH COUNCIL

FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR

2025 - 2026

Prepared by: Bill Robinson

Issued April 2026

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Statement of Responsibility

The audit work I have undertaken was carried out based upon the Internal Audit Scope agreed with Berkswell Parish Council

This report has been prepared solely for Berkswell Parish Council's use and should not be quoted in whole or in part. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, nor is intended, for any other purpose.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to my attention during the course of the audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. The Parish Council should assess recommendations for improvements for their full impact on the Parish Council's budget, financial regulations, standing orders, risk assessments, and any other activities before they are implemented.

The responsibility for a sound system of internal control rests with the Parish Council and therefore audit work performed by the Internal Auditor should not be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud or irregularity should there be any, although these internal audit procedures are designed so that any material irregularity has a reasonable probability of discovery. Even sound systems of internal control may not be proof against collusive fraud. Internal audit procedures are designed to focus on areas that are considered to be of greatest risk and significance. Effective implementation of Internal Audit recommendations by the Internal Auditor to the Parish Council is important for the maintenance of a reliable internal control system.

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Berkswell Parish Council
Internal Audit

The Internal audit was undertaken on 15th April 2026 with the Clerk/RFO.

Accurate book keeping

- Income and expenditure entries to the cashbook spreadsheet were checked and found to be up to date and correct
- All payments and receipts were found to be correct and supported by the requisite documentation
- All payments were supported by the proper authorisation from the Parish Council
- Bank reconciliation – this was checked and found to be correct.
- In addition an audit trail of the following cheques was carried out

The following audit trail was carried out

Payments from Berkswell Parish Council account

For year 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

Date	Invoice	Payment	Minute	Payee	Amount
Apr.25	EBP 539	BACS	979-20a	Staff	£142.85
Apr.25	EBP 539	BACS	979-20a	JM Hickin	£856.15
Jul.25	EBP 544	BACS	985-10a	W Robinson	£217.60
Jul. 25	EBP 547	BACS	985-10a	B & B FC	£25.00
Jul. 25	EBP 548	BACS	985-10a	Zurich	£508.48
Jul. 25	EBP 561	BACS	985-10a	WALC	£1032.60
Jul. 25	EBP 562	BACS	985-10a	JM Hickin	£451.75
Jul. 25	EBP 569	BACS	985-10a	Moore	£378.00
Sep. 25	EBP 571	BACS	993-9a	J Hubbard	£9,036.00
Sep. 25	EBP 573	BACS	993-9a	JM Hickin	£451.75
Sep. 25	EBP 578	BACS	993-9a	Loos for Hire	£264.00
Sep. 25	EBP 579	BACS	993-9a	Post Office	£445.80

Date	Invoice	Payment	Minute	Payee	Amount
Nov. 25	EBP 580	BACS	1000-9a	Hornets	£25.00
Nov. 25	EBP 588	BACS	1000-9a	Methodist Church	£36.00
Nov. 25	EBP 591	BACS	1000-9a	JM Hickin	£451.75
Nov. 25	EBP 598	BACS	1000-9a	Open Spaces	£45.00
Jan. 26	EBP 608	BACS	1008-9a	R.Drake	£100.00
Jan. 26	EBP 617	BACS	1008-9a	JM Hickin	£240.00
Jan. 26	EBP 631	BACS	1008-9a	Dawsons	£936.00
Jan. 26	EBP 648	BACS	1008-9a	Methodist Church	£24.00

All payments were found to be matched to the individual invoice, and permission to pay properly recorded in the minutes.
All income was banked in a prompt manner and properly recorded.

It was noted that Berkswell Parish Council meets on a bi-monthly basis.

Year End Accounts
The account figures for the financial year 2025 - 2026 as shown to the internal auditor were checked and found to be arithmetically correct and reconciled to the bank statements shown.

It was noted that the Parish Council accounts were produced by the Clerk/RFO and audited on a quarterly basis by different Parish Cllrs – this is good practice.

The Internal Audit requirements of the AGAR for the annual year end 2025 -2026 was signed by this internal auditor.

Scribe Financial Package
There is no cashbook and all financial transactions of the Parish Council are recorded on a Scribe Financial Package, which was checked and found to be correct and in accordance with the bank statements. It was further noted that a subset of the cashbook is prepared for Cllr. inspection and this is also set into the Scribe package.

Sec.137 Payments
It was noted in page 976 item 23 that Berkswell Parish Council Sec.137 payments for the financial year 2025-2026 under this power were well within the statutory limit.

It was noted that an analysis of all Sec.137 payments in the financial year was made by the Clerk/RFO to determine how often and for what purpose this power was used – it is good practice for Cllrs. to understand how and when this particular power is used.

Income Control
It was noted that at each meeting of Berkswell Parish Council the Clerk/RFO provides bank balances for all accounts together with regular bank reconciliations – this is a good practice.

It was noted that all Parish Council accounts have been checked for the financial year 2025-2026 and found to be properly reconciled to the bank statements shown.

It was noted that the Clerk/RFO produces half yearly budget spreadsheets for Councillors to monitor, with three Cllrs having online access to the bank accounts and any other Cllr.can ask for access.

It was noted that the accounts are backed up to a standalone hard drive, and to the Google cloud.

It was noted that all accounts are placed on the Parish Council website for public inspection – this is good practice

Budget Control and Precept
It was noted in minute page 1009 items 11a and 11b that the Parish Council received and discussed draft budget and precept options from the Clerk/RFO for the 2026-2027 financial year. Following detailed discussions the budget and precept levels were set for the financial year 2026-2027, and authorised submission of the precept demand to SMBC - this is a good process to determine the annual budget and precept levels.
It was noted that the Clerk/RFO provides a budget comparison (budgeted figures against actual expenditure) – good practice.

It was noted that no loans were raised by the Parish Council

Online Banking
It was noted that Berkswell Parish Council has been operating an online banking system with the Co-Op bank for more than four years with no significant problems .

Annual Payments
It was noted in minute page 975 item18a that all annual payments for the financial year 2025-26 were listed and approved – good practice.

It was noted in minute page 975 item 18b that the Clerk/RFO has delegated powers to negotiate service/subscription payments to a level of + or – 10% of the values listed, and are made in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Petty Cash
It was noted that Berkswell Parish Council does not operate a petty cash scheme, and this will be indicated by the internal auditor on an attached note to the external auditor Moore.

Standing Orders
It was noted in minute page 972 item 14 that Standing Orders were reviewed and approved.

Financial Regulations
It was noted in minute page 972 item 14 that Financial Regulations were reviewed and approved – good practice to review and amend if necessary all regulations.

Asset Register
It was noted in minute page 974 item 16 that the Berkswell Parish Council Asset Register was updated and approved from the previous year with the sum matching box 9 of the AGAR 2025-26 page 5.

Minutes of the Parish Council meetings
All minutes were checked, and found to be satisfactory and properly signed, with no evidence of any unusual activity,
It was noted that Berkswell Parish Council meets on a bi-monthly basis

It was noted that the Clerk provides a list of dates for Council and committee meetings for the forthcoming year – good practice to give parishioners notice of forthcoming meetings.

It was noted in minute page 986 that the Chair authorised the transfer of funds – Berkswell Parish Council should consider whether power can be lawfully delegated to an individual Cllr.

It was noted in minute page 988 item 18 dii that an individual Cllr. was authorised to obtain quotes, Berkswell Parish Council should be aware that this could put the Cllr. in an invidious position when quotes are being determined (potential of bias). It would be worthwhile for the Council to consider having all quotes delivered to the Clerk/RFO..

Agenda
All agendas have been properly made and signed by the Clerk with no unusual activity and held on the Parish Council website.

Internal Audit Review
It was noted in minute page 975 item 19 that Berkswell Parish Council found that the internal audit for the financial year 2024-25 was carried out and thanked the Clerk/RFO for maintaining financial control and compliance

A copy of the internal audit report for the financial year 2025-2026 will be circulated to all Cllrs for review of effectiveness, and be available on the Parish Council website – good practice.

AGAR 2024-2025
It was noted in minute age 975 item 21 that the Annual Governance Statement was approved.
It was noted in minute age 975 item 22 that the Annual Accounting Statement was approved.

Risk Management Assessment
It was noted that the online payments are properly made by the Clerk/RFO with one Cllr (two signatories are no longer required by law for internet banking)

It was noted in minute page 972 item 13 that bank signatories were approved.
It was noted in the minute page 986 item 14a that Berkswell Parish Council approved the updated Risk Register, and Risk Framework,– good practice
It was noted in the minute page 1009 item 14a that an asset inspection was carried out – good practice.

Payroll
It was noted that an outside contractor DM Payroll Services provides this function for Berkswell Parish Council and is functioning properly with all relevant taxes and NICS being identified on a monthly basis.

Insurance
It was noted in minute 974 item 17 that Berkswell Parish Council authorised the Clerk/RFO to renew the existing contract with Zurich.

Policies and Procedures
It was noted in minute page 972 item 14a-c that all other Berkswell Parish Council policies were reviewed, amended as necessary, and approved:-

IT Policy	Press and Media	Reserves Policy
Grant Awarding	Privacy Policy	Freedom of Information

Complaints Procedure	Risk Management	Asset Register
Asset Inspection Checklist	Green Belt Policy	Employment Policy
Equality Policy	Tree safety Policy	Meetings with third Parties

Committees
It was noted in minute page 972 item 11 that the Parish Council committee members were appointed.

Outside Bodies
It was noted in minute age 972 that the current Parish Council representatives to outside bodies would continue as they are,

Exercise of Public Rights
It was noted in minute age 975 item 23 that dates for the Public Rights of Inspection for the financial year 2024-25 were approved

It was noted in that Berkswell Parish Council confirmed online and on websites the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights of Inspection for the financial year 2025-26 will be those dates that are shown on the Moore notice.

Allowances
It was noted in minute page 974 items 15a-f that after discussion Berkswell Parish Council agreed to continue with its policy of adopting the Parish Basic Allowance as published by SMBC.

Website
It was noted that the Parish Council website meets all requirements and is easy to navigate and use.

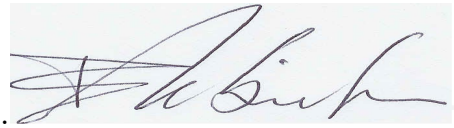
Meeting Dates
It was noted in minute page 971 items 100a-d that the venue and dates for Berkswell Parish Council meetings for the financial year 2025-26 were approved – good practice to inform parishioners of these dates.

Conclusion
Whilst undertaking the Internal Audit, it is apparent that the Clerk / RFO has undertaken his responsibilities to the standard required by the Governance and Accountability in Local Councils, and the Parish Council is also carrying out its duties with regard to that document.
The Parish Council and Clerk/RFO are to be commended on their attitudes towards the internal audit responses, financial responsibilities, responsibilities to the parishioners, and to the quality and openness of their website

Where I have commented on potential future actions, these are not criticisms as such; rather they are issues for the Parish Council to consider.

It will be noted that in the Internal Audit Report 2025/26 of the AGAR Return 2025/26 Part 3 the internal auditor marked items F and K as Not Covered. This does not imply that there is anything untoward regarding the Parish Council accounts, rather this is a response required by the external auditor and in the case of Berkswell Parish Council it means that there is no petty cash, also item K on that page is also marked as Not covered, this too is a requirement by the external auditor and is not applicable to Berkswell Parish Council. A separate letter to Moore to that effect has been added by the internal auditor

This concludes the Internal Audit

Signed……  Dated… 25th April 2026

W.J.Robinson