



Jill Larcombe
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Bampton Town Council
4A Newton Square
Bampton
Tiverton
EX16 9NE

30th June 2026

Dear Jill,

END OF YEAR INTERNAL AUDIT 2025/26

Parish & Town Auditing Services have been appointed to undertake the internal audits at Bampton Town Council. The annual internal audit for 2025/26 financial year was completed on 30th June 2026.

I can confirm that I am independent of the Parish Council.

As stated in the Letter of Engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete the internal audit section of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year. In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements. This will be undertaken by the Council's appointed External Auditor.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These controls are included in the following report.

Thank you for all the information you have provided to enable the audit to be undertaken.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Russell, Internal Auditor

INTERNAL AUDIT

Outlined below is an overview of the 10 Assertions within the Practitioners Guide 2025. Each of these are dealt with under the relevant Governance sections contained in Section 1 of the AGAR:

AGS Assertion 1 — Financial management and preparation of accounts

- Accounting Records and supporting documents:
- Bank reconciliation:
- Budget setting:
- Investments:
- Reserves:
- General Reserves:
- Earmarked and other reserves:

AGS Assertion 2 — Internal control

- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations:
- Safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money:
- Employment:
- VAT
- Fixed assets and equipment:
- Loans and long-term liabilities:

AGS Assertion 3 — Compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices

- Acting with its powers:

AGS Assertion 4 — Exercise of public rights

AGS Assertion 5 — Risk management

AGS Assertion 6 — Internal audit

AGS Assertion 7 — Reports from auditors

AGS Assertion 8 — Significant events

AGS Assertion 9 — Trust funds (local councils only)

AGS Assertion 10 — Digital and data compliance

The following headings are based on Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement.

A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.

The Town Clerk has been appointed as RFO (LGA1972 s151).

The roll over figure is £73,921.52 (Box 7).

The Council maintains its accounts using a spreadsheet. A sample of the financial transactions between 1st April and 31st March 2026 has been undertaken. The following checks were carried out:

- A review of the payment reports against the bank statements;
- A review of the cashbook against the bank statements and invoices paid;
- A sample of Payments have been checked against the bank statements to verify accuracy.

There is a proper process in place to ensure that financial information is correctly recorded and reported to Council as part of its governance procedures. Procedures are included in the Financial Regulations.

The Council receives a list of payments at its Full Council meetings for approval.

The Council has a Risk Assessment in place and is available for review on the website. [Risk Assessment](#)

Bank reconciliations are prepared monthly and reported to Full Council for signing off. These are included in the main agenda and minuted.

There is appropriate segregation in place.

The year end bank reconciliation has been completed. This was referenced back to the bank statements. The final balance held by the Council amounts to £123,837.18 as at 31st March 2026.

As the Council has balances over £100,000 it will require an Investment Policy.

The Council has met this control objective.

B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

Tenders and Contracts are governed by Financial Regulations. All contracts being tendered should be published on the Parish Council's website as well as the Find a Tender portal where required.

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are based on the most recent NALC template version and reflect recent legislative changes.

The following financial process is in place:

- Invoices are received by the Clerk;

- These are reviewed for accuracy, printed out and saved electronically in the accounting software;
- Payments are reviewed by Full Council on a monthly basis. A list of payments is included on the agenda. **Recommend that the payment list be published as part of the additional papers for each meeting alongside the bank reconciliation and the monthly budget monitoring report;**
- A list of payments is presented to Council and authorised/ratified.
- Payment is normally paid by BACS;
- The Clerk uploads the transactions on the banking app and two Councillors authorise payment.

There is appropriate segregation in place.

The Council is not VAT registered. A claim for £25,842.23 was received in July relating to the previous year. The VAT claim for 2025/26 will be £10,806.82 according to the accounts.

The Council has met this control objective.

C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

The Council has a Risk Assessment in place.

The Council is insured through Clear Councils. Policy Number LCO01839. The policy runs from 01/06/2024 to 31/05/2026. The policy includes Employers Liability (£10 million), Public and Products Liability (£10 million) and a Fidelity Guarantee (£250k). The Council is adequately insured.

The Council has adequate internal controls in place to ensure that it carries out its day-to-day business effectively and efficiently and has adopted an Internals Control Policy.

The Council has met this control objective.

D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.

Council set its precept at its meeting held on 6th January 2026. A precept of £85,000 was requested. (Minute 13.5)

13.5. To agree the precept for 2025-26. It was resolved unanimously to request a precept of £85,000.

It has been confirmed that a precept of £80,000 was requested. (MHCLG Parish Code E1133P001)

Budget monitoring reports are reviewed during the budget and precept setting period and on a regular basis by the Council.

The Council has set up Earmarked Reserves but these have not been outlined in the accounts. **Recommend that the Earmarked Reserves are listed in the accounts and reviewed annually.**

Note that Council should only hold up to its annual precept as a General Reserve with any additional reserves requiring specific earmarked allocations.

The Council had the following Bank Statement Balances as at 31st March 2026:

ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Unity Trust Current A/C	£38,855.76
CCLA	£84,855.76
Lloyds Bank Card	£0.00
TOTAL	£123,837.18

Recommend that Council considers opening a deposit account with Unity Trust to increase its interest income.

The Council has met this control objective.

E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

Council's other income for 2025/26 is bank interest, stall fees, various donations, various grants including the P3 grant and the Fingerpost grants, and sponsorship income. These are all correctly recorded within the accounts.

The Council has met this control objective.

F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.

The Council does not operate a petty cash account nor has it made any cash purchases during the year as it has a Lloyds bank card which is paid off monthly.

The Council has met this control objective.

G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.

The Clerk has a contract of employment in place.

Member do not receive a members' allowance.

A sample of salaries has been checked and confirmed. Salaries paid during the year have been reviewed. Gross pay is calculated in accordance with the relevant NJC scale. Tax codes are included on the payslips and deductions properly calculated.

Council is not a member of a Pension Scheme.

A test sample was undertaken and it was confirmed that the correct net pay was paid to the employee with tax and NI contributions correctly deducted and paid to the respective agencies.

Noted that interim Clerking Services paid during the year related to the previous financial year. The Clerk is now being paid as required via PAYE payroll.

The Council has met this control objective.

H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

An Asset Register is in place. Current value of the assets amounts to £320,205. This is the amount included on the AGAR. The register has been updated and includes both additions and deletions during the year. A total of £5,040 of assets have been deleted.

Council has no long-term investments in place.

The Council has no loans in place.

The Council has met this control objective.

I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.

Bank reconciliations are prepared monthly, reviewed by Full Council and formally minuted and signed off.

The Council has met this control objective.

J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.

Accounts are maintained on a receipts and payments basis. Receipts and payments agree to the cash book and are supported by an adequate audit trail.

The Council has met this control objective.

K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick “not covered”).

Not covered.

L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The following information should be published on the Parish Council's website under the Smaller Authorities Transparency Code ([SI/SR Template](#))

Expenditure exceeding £100

Local authorities must publish details of each individual item of expenditure that exceeds £100. [Published as part of the agenda/minutes.](#)

End of year accounts

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. [Published.](#)

Annual governance statement

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. [Published.](#)

Internal audit report

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. [Published.](#)

List of councillor or member responsibilities

Annual publication of councillor or member responsibilities no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. [Published.](#)
[Recommend additional information is included under Councillor information.](#)

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Parish councils and port health authorities to publish details of all public land and building assets – either in its full asset and liabilities register or as an edited version. [Published](#)

Minutes, agendas and papers of formal meetings

Publication of draft minutes from all formal meetings not later than one month after the meeting has taken place. Publication of meeting agendas and associated meeting papers not later than three clear days before the meeting to which they relate is taking place. [Published.](#)

The Council has met this control objective.

M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (*during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set*).

The publication requirements were met. The Notice states 1st July to 11th August 2025. This meets the statutory 30 day requirement.

The Council formally minuted the approval of the dates of the public notice at the meeting where the AGAR was approved on 28th June 2025. (Minute 41/06/25.d).

The Council has met this control objective.

N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR.

Publication Requirements Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, Authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage: Before 1 July 2025 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited: [Published](#)
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, approved and signed, page 4: [Published](#)
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25, approved and signed, page 5: [Published](#)

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report. [Published](#)

The Council has met this control objective.

O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.

Council has a .gov.uk domain for its website and email. The Council meets best practice requirements.

The Council has adopted an IT policy as required. Adopted in March 2026.

Recommend that a copy be uploaded onto the website.

The Council has an Accessibility Statement published on its website. [Accessibility Statement - Bampton Town Council](#)

Recommend that this be updated to reference WCAG2.2AA. See note below:

Note that since September 2020, all parish and Parish councils must have a website that complies with Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). As from October 2024 that rating level changed from WCAG2.1 AA to WCAG2.2AA so that it meets Accessibility Guidelines as set in the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility regulations.

It has been confirmed that Bampton Parish Council website complies with WCAG 2.2 AA. It achieves 82%: [Scan Results — CompliaScan](#)

Accessibility has been reviewed and the parish council website scores 8.7 out of 10: [WAVE Report of Home - Bampton Town Council](#)

Data Protection requirements:

- Data Protection Lead – Clerk is the DP Lead.
- Data Audit: Completed. Copy has been provided.
- Training for staff and Councillors: Councillor and staff undertake relevant training.
- Data Protection Policy: [Data Protection Policy 2026.pdf](#)
- Document Retention Policy: Not published. **Please action.**
- Privacy Notice: [bampton-privacy-notice.pdf](#)
- Both hard copy and electronic data have relevant protections in place.

A Freedom of Information Policy is in place: [Freedom of Information Publication Scheme 2025.pdf](#)

The Council has met this control objective

P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

The Council is not a sole trustee.