

# Internal Audit Report for Denham Parish Council for the period ending 31 March 2024

Clerk	Wendy Alcock
RFO (if different)	As above
Chairperson	Duncan McGregor
Precept	£ 3,712.00
Income	£ 188,221.57
Expenditure	£ 175,582.84
General reserves	£ 3,080.73
Earmarked reserves	£ 16,930.62
Audit type	Annual
Auditor name	Julie Lawes

#### Introduction

The primary objective of internal audit is to review, appraise and report upon the adequacy of internal control systems operating throughout the council. To achieve this SALC adopt a predominantly systems-based approach to audit.

The council's internal control system comprises the whole network of systems established within the council to provide reasonable assurance that the council's objectives will be achieved, with reference to:

- the effectiveness of operations
- the economic and efficient use of resources

Last reviewed: 18th January 2024



- compliance with applicable policies, procedures, laws, and regulations
- the safeguarding of assets and interests from losses of all kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity, and corruption
- · the integrity and reliability of information, accounts, and data

# Methodology

When conducting the audit, the internal auditor may:

- conduct a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year in order to be able to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
- review the reliability and integrity of financial information and the means used to identify, measure, classify and report such information
- review the means of safeguarding assets and, as appropriate, verify the existence of such assets
- appraise the economy and efficiency with which resources are employed, identify opportunities to improve performance and recommend solutions to problems
- review the established systems to ensure compliance with those policies, procedures, laws, and regulations which could have a significant impact on operations, and determine whether the council complies
- review the operations and activities to ascertain whether results are consistent with objectives and whether they are being conducted as planned



# Section 1 – proper bookkeeping

The internal auditor will look at the methods and processes used to manage the council's accounts and in particular that it provides clear data for reporting and monitoring purposes. This includes checking information is accurate, kept up to date, referenced and verified.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary	
Is the ledger maintained and up to date?  YES		The council uses an excel spreadsheet to produce reports on a Receipts and Payments basis and ensures that the financial transactions of the parish council are as accurate as reasonably practicable. All transactions are well referenced and provide an effective tool for the basis of the council's internal controls.	
Is the cash book up to date and regularly verified?	YES	Council follows Proper Practices in ensuring that its accounting procedure gives an accurate presentation of the authority's true financial position.  This provides good evidence to support the council's underlying statements and is verified monthly within its reconciliations.	
Is the arithmetic correct?	YES	A number of spot checks were carried out and the functionality of the cashbook was found to be in order.	

### Additional comments:



Section 2 – Financial Regulation and Standing Orders

The internal auditor will check the date the Council conducted its annual review of both Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and in particular check if these are based on NALC'S latest model which include legislative changes.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Have Standing Orders been adopted, up to date and reviewed annually?	YES	The Standing Orders, as seen on the Parish Council's website, were approved at a meeting of council held 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2023, which were then subsequently updated and ratified at a further meeting held 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2023.  The Standing Orders are compliant with legislation and have been adapted (where they are not statutory requirements) to ensure that they are relevant to the Parish Council.  Procurement Thresholds amendments (SI 2022/139) of the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022 which came into force on 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2022 and make the changes to the contract value limits from £25,000 to £30,000 for non-central government authorities has been updated.
Are Financial Regulations up to date and reviewed annually?	YES	Financial Regulations (FR), as seen on the Council's website show a review date of 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 and are based on the NALC Model Financial Regulations. Procurement Thresholds amendments (SI 2022/139) of the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022 which came into force on 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2022 and make the changes to the contract value limits from £25,000 to £30,000 for non-central government authorities has been updated.
Has the Council properly tailored the Financial Regulations?	YES	The Council's Financial Regulations have been tailored to the Parish Council.
Has the Council appointed a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)? <sup>1</sup>	YES	In accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972(d) (financial administration), the Council has appointed a person (the Clerk) to be responsible for the administration of the financial affairs of the relevant authority in accordance with 1.8 of the Financial Regulations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Section 151 Local Government Act 1972 (d)

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# Section 3 – Payment controls

The internal auditor will specifically check bank reconciliation including credit/debit cards and management approval processes and evidence that internal Financial Regulations (FO) are being followed. The internal auditor will examine how regular payments are managed and specifically seek evidence that these have been brought back to the Council for verification purposes especially where the actual payment made differs from the amount previously agreed. VAT should be clearly identified including evidence that claims have been correctly managed. The internal auditor will check if the Council has a clear understanding on eligibility in relation to the General Power of Competence and that s.137 has been correctly applied and managed.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Is there supporting paperwork for payments with appropriate authorisation?	YES	A selection of expenditure items was made (see below) and cross-checked against the cash book, invoices and bank statements. At each full council meeting a list of payments is presented to ensure formal approval of expenditure and this is correctly minuted. This demonstrates good practice in that there are measures in place that help safeguard public money supported by a straight forward and clear audit trail for each payment.
Where applicable, are internet banking transactions properly recorded and approved?	YES	Payments are approved by full council, with each invoice initialled / signed by the appropriate authorisers of the accounts. Councils Risk Assessment details All payments require two signatories and monthly accounts are presented to Council for approval. It was recorded that the mandate for banking was updated at a meeting held 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023.
Is VAT correctly identified, recorded, and claimed within time limits?	YES	VAT is identified in the cash book with a year end figure of £28,145.48 and five claims made during the period of review totalling £28,057.28.
Has the Council adopted the General Power of Competence (GPOC) and is there evidence this is being applied correctly? <sup>2</sup>	N/A	The council has not adopted the General Power of Competence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Localism Act

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Are payments under s.137 <sup>3</sup> separately recorded,	N/A	The council did not record any s137 payments for the year under review.
minuted and is there evidence of direct benefit to		
electorate?		
Where applicable, are payments of interest and	N/A	Council has no loans
principal sums in respect of loans paid in accordance		
with agreements?		
Additional comments:		

#### Section 4 – Risk management

The internal auditor will expect to find evidence of the management of risks from identification of what those are for each individual Council through to how these will be managed and the controls in place to mitigate these and that these have been approved by the Council.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Is there evidence of risk assessment documentation?	YES	The risk assessment documentation as reviewed provides details of the risks associated with the functioning of a smaller authority and the measures that the Council will undertake to mitigate such risks. The Risk Register for the year under review was considered and adopted by full Council at its meeting of 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023 and is published on the council website.
Is there evidence that risks are being identified and managed?	YES	Council is aware that risk assessment needs to focus on the safety of the parish council's assets and in particular its money. There is evidence that overall, the parish council has taken action to identify and assess those risks and has considered what actions or decisions it needs to take during

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act") enables local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory expenditure. The basic power is for a local council to spend money (subject to the statutory limit – of £9.93 per elector) on purposes for the direct benefit of its area, or part of its area, or all or some of its inhabitants.



YES	During the period under review, council held insurance with Ansvar
	Insurance. This was approved by council at a meeting held 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2024. Insurance shows core cover for the following: Employers Liability: £5m; Public liability: £10m.  Comment: Council should ensure that the level of Fidelity Cover is that of at least the year end balance plus 50% of the precept / grants to be received.
YES	At the meeting of 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023, Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, confirmed that the financial and management systems of the council were sound and adequate and internal control arrangements were efficient and effective to address the risks associated with the management of public finances.  Comment: The Internal Control Statement published on the council website is detailed as 31/03/2023 and dated 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2022 and requires updating.
YES	In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Parish Council formally reviewed the scope and effectiveness of its internal audit arrangements, evidence of which is contained within its Internal Control Policy as adopted on 23rd May 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Accounts and Audit Regulations

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Practitioners Guide



# Section 5 - Budgetary controls

The internal auditor will seek verification that budgets are properly prepared, agreed and monitored. In particular they will look for evidence of good practice in that the key stages of the budgetary process have been followed

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Verify that budget has been properly prepared and agreed	YES	The draft budget for the year 2023/2024 in the sum of £5,010.00 was approved by full Council at a meeting on 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2022.
Verify that the precept amount has been agreed in full Council and clearly minuted	YES	The precept was set at £3,712 for 2023/2024, as confirmed at the above meeting.
Regular reporting of expenditure and variances from budget	YES	The minutes evidence that Council carried out monthly reviews covering the budget for the current year with a review of income and expenditure against budget along with forecasts for the remainder of the year.  Virements were approved at a meeting held 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2024.
Reserves held – general and earmarked <sup>6</sup>	YES	The Council, as at year-end, had Earmarked Reserves totalling £16,930.62 with the balance being General Reserves of £3,080.73.

#### Additional comments:

Council has followed the recommended key stages as to the budgetary process for the year:

decide the form and level of detail of the budget; review the current year budget and spending; determine the cost of spending plans; assess levels of income; bring together spending and income plans; provide for contingencies and consider the need for reserves; approve the budget; confirm the precept or rates and special levies; and review progress against the budget regularly throughout the year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> In accordance with proper practices, the generally accepted minimum level of a Smaller Authority's General Reserve is that this should be maintained at between three (3) and twelve (12) months of Net Revenue Expenditure



#### Section 6 - income controls

The internal auditor will seek evidence to ensure income is correct managed – recorded, banked, and reported and test mechanisms used to achieve this.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	YES	Income is recorded in accordance with Council's Financial Regulations. A number of items of income were cross checked against cash book and bank statement and found to be in order and recorded in accordance with Proper Practices. The RFO has ensured that the accounting records contain all day-to-day entries of all sums of money received.
Is income reported to full council?	YES	Income received is reported to full Council within the financial reports submitted to full Council in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.
Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax Authority's notification?	YES	Council received precept in the sum of £3,712 from Mid-Suffolk District Council for the period under review Evidence was provided showing a full audit trail from Precept being discussed and approved to being served on the Charging Authority to remittance advice showing the Precept to be paid and receipt of same in the Council's Bank Account.
If appropriate, are CIL reporting schedules in accordance with the Regulations? <sup>7</sup>	N/A	Council does not hold any CIL.
Is CIL income reported to the council?	N/A	
Does unspent CIL income form part of earmarked reserves?	N/A	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010

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Has an annual report been produced?	N/A	
Has it been published on the outbority's website?	Λ1/Λ	1
Has it been published on the authority's website?	N/A	
Additional comments:		
Additional Comments.		



# Section 7 - petty cash

The Internal Auditor will seek evidence that the Council has followed its own policies, procedures, and verification processes and that these are up to date.

		Internal auditor commentary
Is petty cash in operation?	N/A	Council does not operate a petty cash system.
If appropriate, is there an adequate control system in place?	N/A	As above

#### Additional comments:

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# Section 8 - Payroll controls

The Internal Auditor will check salaries were approved in accordance with PAYE, NI, Pension and that there is a clear understanding that the clerk is not self-employed. The Internal Auditor will also review how payroll is managed including evidence of approval of payslips.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Do all employees have contracts of employment?	YES	Council had 1 employee on its payroll at the period end of 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024. Employment contracts were not reviewed during the internal audit but the Clerk to the Council has confirmed that a Contract of Employment is in place.  All salary payments are presented to the Council for approval and payments
Has the Council approved salary paid?	YES	made in accordance with Council's own Financial Regulations. The annual NALC NJC pay award was recorded as approved at a meeting of council held 28th November 2023.  No employee is paid the national minimum wage.
Minimum wage paid?	NO	
Are arrangements in place for authorising of the payroll and payments to the council? Does this include a verification process for agreeing rates of pay to be applied?	YES	There are suitable payroll arrangements in place which ensures the accuracy and legitimacy of payments of salaries and wages, and associated liabilities and as such the council has complied with its duties under legislation.
Do salary payments include deductions for PAYE/NIC? Is PAYE/NIC paid promptly to HMRC?	YES	The payroll function for the year under review is operated in accordance with HM Revenue and Customs guidelines and outsourced to Suffolk Association of Local Councils. Cross-checks were completed on three payments covering salary and PAYE were found to be in order. Deductions paid to HM Revenue and Customs during the year under review were made in accordance with timescales as set out in the regulations.

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Is there evidence that the Council is aware of its pension responsibilities? Are pension payments in operation? <sup>8</sup>	YES	Council is aware of its pension responsibilities with it referenced in the meetings of the full council meeting held 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 that the clerk had contacted the Pension Regulator advising of a change of staff details.
Have pension re-declaration duties been carried out	YES	As above
Are there any other payments (e.g.: expenses) and are these reasonable and approved by the Council?	YES	There is a satisfactory expense system in place and all expenses claimed are approved in accordance with Council's Financial Regulations.  At home expenses were approved by council at a meeting held 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2023.
Additional comments:	•	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Pension Regulator – <u>website click here</u>



#### Section 9 - Asset control

The Internal Audit will be seeking to establish if there is a list of assets in accordance with proper practices including the date of acquisition, location, and value. This extends to checking policies (with evidence of review) and that the Council has applied the documented approach in practice. The Internal Auditor will check not only valuation processes but the existence of reserve budgets for depreciation and adequacy of insurance. A clear audit trail should be available when items are purchased including minutes to evidence approval.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Does the Council maintain a register of material assets it owns and manage this in accordance with proper practices? <sup>9</sup>	YES	The Asset Register, as viewed on the Council's website, and as approved at the meeting of 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023, reflects those items listed under insurance and within the Parish Council's remit for maintenance and ownership. It is noted that the declared value for all assets £6,681 which reflects overall movement in the asset register covering acquisitions and disposals.
Is the value of the assets included? (Note value for insurance purposes may differ)	YES	Council is mindful of the guidance within the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England March 2022 on the valuation of its assets and has ensured that where the acquisition value of the asset at the time of first recording is used, that method of valuation has been consistently applied.
Are records of deeds, articles, land registry title number available?	N/A	Council did not detail any land ownership / lease within its asset register.
Is the asset register up to date and reviewed annually?	YES	The asset register was signed off by the Council at its meeting on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023 confirming it covers assets within the ownership or responsibility of the Council.

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Cross checking of insurance cover	YES	Council has insurance under all risks cover for its assets as specified under generic headings on the insurance schedule.
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#### Additional comments:

Councils should be mindful of the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities for England (March 2019) regarding valuation of assets and ensured that where the acquisition value of the asset at the time of first recording is used, that method of valuation has been consistently applied and if/where amended it will need to publish and provide explanations in changes in value to any previously recorded assets.



#### Section 10 - bank reconciliation

The internal auditor will seek to establish that the Council understands and can evidence good practice and internal control mechanisms in relation to bank reconciliation.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Is bank reconciliation regularly completed and reconciled with the cash book and cover every account?	YES	Bank reconciliations are regularly completed and reconcile with the cashbook and bank statements.
Do bank balances agree with bank statements?	YES	Bank balances agree with period end statements and, as at year end 31st March 2024 the balance across the council's accounts stood at £20,011.35. Barclays Community Account £18,024.00 Barclays Savings Account £1,987.35
Is there regular reporting of bank balances at Council meetings?	YES	Balances across the Council's accounts are reported at each meeting of full Council.  The Council is aware that in accordance with proper practices, the bank reconciliation is a key tool for management as it assists with the regular monitoring of cash flows and therefore aids decision-making.

Last reviewed: 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024



#### Section 11 - year end procedures **Evidence** Internal auditor commentary Are appropriate accounting procedures used? YES Accounts are produced on a receipts and expenditure/ basis and all found to be in order. Financial trail from records to presented accounts YES The end of year accounts and supporting documentation were well presented for the internal auditor review. Has the appropriate end of year AGAR<sup>10</sup> documents YES As Council is a smaller authority with gross income and expenditure been completed? exceeding £25,000 it will be required to complete Part 3 of the AGAR. Did the Council meet the exemption criteria and As the Parish Council had gross income and expenditure exceeding N/A correctly declared itself exempt? £25,000 it was not able to declare itself exempt from a limited assurance review. During the period in guestion did the small authority YES During the review of the publication requirements of the Accounts and Audit demonstrate that it correctly provided for the exercise of Regulations 2015, it is noted that, for the year 2022-2023, the Council public right as required by the Accounts and Audit correctly provided for the exercise of elector's rights. The RFO had set the Regulations 2015? dates for the inspection of the Council's accounts and associated documents as Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 with the date of the notice being Sunday 4th June 2023. This was published on the council website. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, as a smaller Have the publication requirements been met in YES accordance with the Regulations?11 authority with either income or expenditure exceeding £25,000 but not exceeding £6.5 million, it is confirmed that the Council did comply with the

requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 for the year ending

31st March 2023 as it published the following on its website:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

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	Annual Internal Audit Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement Section 2 - Accounting Statements Section 3 - The External Auditor Report and Certificate Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15(2) Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.  Comment: Council might wish to note that there is a requirement to ensure that Sections 1, 2 and 3 are published and remain available for public access for a period of not less than 5 years from the date of publication.
Additional comments:	



#### Section 12 – internal audit

The internal auditor will revisit weaknesses and recommendations previously identified to see if these have been addressed. They will also check if any changes introduced require further verification to ensure effectiveness of the corrective action taken.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Has the Council considered the previous internal audit report?	YES	The Internal Auditor's Report for the year ending 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023 was considered and reviewed by the full council at their meeting on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023 with the clerk then providing an action plan which was discussed and approved by council at a further meeting held 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2023.
Has appropriate action been taken regarding the recommendations raised?	YES	The following recommendations were considered and agreed by the Council:  To approve the following policies  Policy and Procedure for Handling Requests for Information  Data Subject Access Request Policy  Information and Security Incident Policy  And contacting the Pension Regulator to update employee information.
Has the Council confirmed the appointment of an internal auditor?	YES	SALC were appointed as the Council's internal auditors for the year ending 31st March 2024 at the meeting of 23rd January 2024.  Council has understood the requirement to ensure that it has a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities for internal audit, audit planning and timing of visits, reporting requirements; access to information; period of engagement and remuneration.

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#### Section 13 – external audit for the period under review

The internal auditor will revisit the external audit so that previous weaknesses and recommendations can be considered.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Has the Council considered the previous external audit report? <sup>12</sup>	N/A	The External Auditor gave no report other than to record that council had not received a limited assurance review previously due to being exempt from audit.
Has appropriate action been taken regarding the comments raised?	N/A	As above

#### Additional comments:

<sup>12</sup> Regulation 20 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 – following completion of an audit the Council should note that it is the Council as a whole (i.e., All members) and not a committee that should receive and consider the audit letter (including Annual Return and Certificate) from the local auditor as soon as reasonably practicable and the minutes should reflect that these have been received.



#### Section 14 – additional information

The internal auditor will look for additional evidence of good record keeping, compliance with data protection regulations, freedom of information and website accessibility regulations.

Evidence		Internal auditor commentary
Was the annual meeting held in accordance with legislation? 13	Partly Met	Council held its Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at which the Chair and other Officers were elected on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023. <b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> In accordance with councils own Standing Orders 5e. the first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairperson.
Is there evidence that Minutes are administered in accordance with legislation? 14	YES	Council is aware that that under LGA 1972 schedule 12, paragraphs 41(1) and 44 the draft minutes of a meeting should be formally approved (with any necessary amendments) at the next meeting. At each meeting, the Chair is given formal approval to sign the minutes.
Is there a list of members' interests held?	YES	Evidence was seen on the District Authority's website the Register of Interests for all current Parish Councillors with a direct link from the Council's own website.
Does the Council have any Trustee responsibilities and if so, are these clearly identified in a Trust Document?	N/A	Council does not have any Trustee Responsibilities.
Has the Transparency Code been correctly applied, and information published in accordance with current legislation?	To be considered	Whilst the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 applies to local authorities, including parish councils with annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) over £200,000, Councils with income over £25,000 but under £200,000 are expected (but are not legally required to do so) to follow its recommendations.  Comment: Council might wish to review its provisions and consider whether it might be able to work towards ensuring compliancy with the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12, paragraph 7 (2) and Schedule 15 (2)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Local Government Act 1972, and the Localism Act 2011

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		requirements of publishing the following data on its website in accordance with the required timescales: Publish quarterly: Individual items of expenditure that exceed £500 (currently published on an annual basis); Government Procurement Card transactions; Invitations to tender for contracts over £5,000; Details of contracts that exceed £5,000. Publish annually: Details of all land and building assets; Grants to Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations; Organisational Chart.
Has the Council registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)? <sup>15</sup>	YES	The Council is correctly registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Data Controller in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation. Expiry 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2024.
Is the Council compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements?	YES	Council has taken active steps to ensure compliancy with the GDPR requirements and has adopted a number of GDPR Policies during the year that provides clear responsibilities and obligations of the Council in respect of the collecting, using and protecting of personal information in accordance with the provisions of the GDPR.
Has the Council published a website accessibility statement on their website in line with Regulations? <sup>16</sup>	YES	Council has accessibility tools on its website thereby allowing for the increased functionality of the council's website, along with a website accessibility statement on the Council operated website detailing the technical information of the website along with the methods used for testing the website; the steps being taken to improve accessibility and how the site is being improved to ensure that content meets the WCAG 2.1 Standard under Regulation 8 of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Data Protection Act 2018

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Website Accessibility Regulations 2018

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Does the council have official email addresses for correspondence? <sup>17</sup>	Partly Met	The clerk to the council holds an official email address of <a href="mailto:clerk@denhamparishcouncil.org">clerk@denhamparishcouncil.org</a> however it is noted that the Chairman holds a Hotmail email address.  Section 5 2.07 of The Practioners Guide (2023) states that "using a gov.uk domain for your council website and email accounts demonstrates the council's official local government status Members of the public are increasingly aware of cyber security so a gov.uk domain can also help build trust and credibility and visually demonstrates authenticity. Many people will now increasingly expect a local council to have a gov.uk domain name."  Click on this link to view the news blog in connection with .gov.uk domain RECOMMENDATION: That council considers changing its councillors to all have official Denham Parish Council email addresses.
Is there evidence that electronic files are backed up?	YES	The council Risk Assessment states the Parish Council electronic records are recorded on the clerk's laptop and are stored on the Microsoft Office One Drive on the cloud. Back-ups are taken live, with continued support from Red Dune IT Company.
Do terms of reference exist for all committees and is there evidence these are regularly reviewed?	N/A	Council does not operate with a committee system.
Additional comments:		

Signed: J. Lawes

Date of Internal Audit Visit: N/A

Date of Internal Audit Report: 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024

On behalf of Suffolk Association of Local Councils

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Practitioners Guide