

TITCHMARSH PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM

The following system has been put in place to minimise significant financial and corporate governance risks to Titchmarsh Parish Council.

1. Financial appointments including the Bank signatories, the Internal Scrutineer and the Responsible Financial Officer are agreed at the Annual meeting in May each year.
2. Details of financial transactions (payee, purpose of expenditure, cheque number, amount and statutory provision and Direct Debit payments) are included in the agenda/summons to meetings and this is published at least three clear days before the Council meeting both on the village notice board and on the village website www.titchmarsh.info.
3. All financial transactions are approved at Council meetings and minuted. Following Council meetings cheques are Verified, signed and cheque stubs and invoices endorsed. Cheques are signed by 2 out of 6 signatories.
4. Quarterly reports showing income and expenditure including comparison against budget are presented, discussed and approved at Council meetings.
5. A draft Budget is presented to Council in November each year, showing comparisons with previous years and the current year's actual expenditure and future year projections. Following discussion at Council, the Budget is finalised so that the Precept can be submitted in accordance with East Northamptonshire Council's timetable.
6. The RFO and Clerk ensure that amount of the precept received is correct in accordance with the precept request sent to the District Council and this is confirmed through the quarterly financial reporting.
7. The RFO and Clerk ensure that other receipts (i.e. allotment rent and rent for the Engine House) are received when due and correctly calculated
8. The Clerk is paid monthly in arrears by Standing Order and each payment is approved by Council. PAYE is applied and all the relevant returns filed on line.
9. Appointment of contractors is carried out with reference to the Financial Regulations and minuted accordingly.
10. Councillors, the RFO, the Scrutineer and the Clerk have had relevant financial management training or experience. Training opportunities for future development are regularly monitored and undertaken where appropriate.
11. All minutes of meetings are sequentially numbered using code yyyy/meeting/minute number. The master copy is kept on the clerk's computer which is backed up to an external device every week. Minutes are also posted on the village noticeboard and on the village website www.titchmarsh.info.
12. Training opportunities and workshops are all discussed at Council and the Clerk and/or Councillors are encouraged to attend where relevant. Attendees then feedback to subsequent meetings.
13. Float files are circulated each month to all Councillors who initial and date a control sheet to confirm that they have seen the file. These files contain background information including

changes to legislation and correspondence. Planning application are no longer available and clerk advises councillors by email.

14. Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct annually and the register of interests is reviewed annually and updated throughout the year as necessary. Access to the register of members interests is possible via the village website www.titchmarsh.info
15. The Clerk has a contract of employment. Her performance is reviewed annually and her salary for the coming year is approved by Council. The review includes looking at working arrangements and record keeping and the outcome of the review is discussed at the next Council meeting.
16. The Parish Council has adopted the Freedom of Information code and requests by the public for inspection of Council records are dealt with under this code.
17. The Parish Council subscribe to the NCALC internal audit programme and an internal audit is conducted on an annual basis
18. The Parish Council's insurance policy includes a fidelity guarantee limit of £100,000 which adequately covers the annual Precept. The cover provided by the Insurance Policy and the level of premium is reviewed annually.
19. Each agenda includes an item for declaration of member's interests. These are declared verbally and then recorded in a log book. (Pecuniary and personal)
20. Details of all financial transactions are methodically recorded including the relevant minute reference.
21. Section 137 expenditure "free resource" is recorded in a separate column within the accounts.
22. VAT returns are submitted on an annual basis. The amount of VAT refunded is checked by the RFO and the Clerk.
23. The Council's Financial Regulations are reviewed annually by the RFO and the Scrutineer and any amendments are put to Council for approval. The Financial Regulations are published on the village website www.titchmarsh.info
24. The Asset Register, Risk Register and Internal Controls are reviewed annually by the RFO, Scrutineer and Clerk and the documents presented to Council for approval.
25. The Council has set up working parties to oversee its relationship with Titchmarsh Village Shop, Titchmarsh Playing Fields Association and the Allotments. These working parties report back to Council as required but at least annually.
26. The Scrutineer reports twice yearly. These reports cover the application of the Internal Controls and also review the Council's relationships with other bodies such as Titchmarsh Village Shop, Titchmarsh Playing Fields Association and Allotment Holders, via the working parties or PC representatives all of whom have a legal and/or financial relationship with the Council.

March 2017