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The Members of Shinfield Parish Council
c/o Mr Bruce Winton
Clerk to Shinfield Parish Council
Shinfield Parish Hall
School Green
Shinfield
Berkshire RG2 9EH

10th June 2026

Ladies and Gentlemen

Internal Audit report for the year ended 31st March 2026 - final review

I have now completed my review of the financial systems and internal controls for the year ended 31st March 2025. My audit has been carried out with reference to the 2025 edition of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide" and with reference to the 2026 edition regarding Assertion 10.

My final work concentrated on fixed assets, risk management and the final accounts. A summary of my findings for the year is attached in Appendix 1.

There are no matters of significance that I need to draw to your attention.

Overall conclusion

The financial records have been well maintained during the year and appear complete and fit for purpose. I did not identify any significant weaknesses in the control systems and procedures and it is clear that the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously. That said, the Council did not approve an IT policy during the year and thus it has not met the requirements of Assertion 10 on the Governance Statement.

Signing of the audit report

The external auditors have stated that my internal audit report gives important evidence for the Council to consider when completing assertions 2 and 6 on the on the governance statement. My two audit reports this year should therefore enable the Council to approve the Annual Return in the knowledge that the internal audit for the year is complete.

I have signed my section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return with the only adverse findings being the late publication of the Notice of Conclusion and the lack of an IT Policy. These matters are described in more detail in sections N and O below.

Yours faithfully

Claire Connell

Appendix 1: Summary of internal audit work covered in 2025-26

Assertion on Annual Return	Assertion met?
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the year.	**Yes**
Rialtas Omega, Bookings, Allotments and Fixed Asset packages are used, kept up-to-date and are accurate. These packages integrate and are produced for the town and parish council sector. There is a suitable level of reporting to Council.	
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	**Yes**
Testing and review of systems shows that expenditure is properly incurred, payments approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. Procurement procedures have been properly followed, although this was not always clearly minuted.	
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	**Yes**
Minutes, Standing Orders, Standing Financial Regulations, insurance cover and the Risk Register indicate that there are proper risk assessment and management procedures. The Risk Register was reviewed in May and updated during the year as appropriate (eg for the running of the café in house). The Standing Orders were updated in June 25 with minor modifications later in the year. The Financial Regulations have been updated in 2026-27. <u>A policy register should be set up containing the date of approval of policies and the date of next review.</u>	
D. The precept resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored and reserves were appropriate.	**Yes**
The reporting of financial results and monitoring of actual against budget was reviewed. This is carried out regularly at a committee level. The budget setting process for 2026-27 was thorough and included a consideration of ongoing earmarked reserve requirements in addition to the planned budget for the forthcoming year.	
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	**Yes**
No significant issues arose during the review and testing of income controls. The following income streams were reviewed: • The precept was agreed to Council minutes and bank statements • CIL income was agreed to bank statements • Hall hire, rental income and allotment income were reviewed and test checks carried out.	

Other income streams such as the cinema and youth club were also reviewed.	
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for	**Yes**
Cash expenditure is low. Payments are supported by receipts.	
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.	**Yes**
The payroll has been run in-house throughout 2025-26. No errors were identified during the transactional testing of a sample of employees for one month. The year end figure included in Box 4 only included staff salaries and associated National Insurance and pension costs as required by the regulations.	
H. Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	**Yes**
The fixed assets register is maintained in Rialtas and this has been updated for new acquisitions during the year.	
I. Periodic bank reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	**Yes**
Bank reconciliations are prepared on a monthly basis. Bank reconciliations have been reviewed by a Councillor on an approximately bi-monthly basis and this is reported to the F&GP committee. The bank payment run which was set up on 31st March but which was shown on the bank statement in April has been included as a creditor as required by the Practitioners' Guide. A new cashbook will be set up to record the cash receipts from the café in 2026-27. These receipts were previously recorded when banked, with the unbanked amount at year-end included in the accounts.	
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cashbook, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	**Yes**
The accounting statements have been correctly prepared on the income and expenditure basis. They agree to the underlying Rialtas data and debtors and creditors are properly recorded.	
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in the previous year, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.	**Not Applicable**
This assertion is not applicable to Shinfield Parish Council as its income and expenditure are far in excess of the £25,000 limit for exemption.	

L. The authority published the required information on a website / web page, up-to-date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation	**Yes**
The AGARs for the past five years are available on the Council website in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The Council website has a dedicated webpage with transparency information clearly available. The Council has published a model publication scheme. <u>A guide to information published should also be published on the website using the template which is available from the ICO.</u>	
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	**Yes**
The exercise was advertised on the website in advance of the period commencing. The exercise was carried out for the correct number of days and included the first 10 working days of July as required	
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for the prior year AGAR	**No**
The Council did not correctly comply with the publication requirements for the AGAR. • **The Notice of conclusion and the final version of the AGAR including the completed section 3 of the AGAR were not published before 30th September 2025.**	
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	**No**
The Council has a generic email address on a Council owned domain. The website meets the legal requirements including WCAG 2.2AA with some exceptions which are listed on the website. An accessibility statement and privacy policy are published. The Council has some GDPR documentation on the website although some of this does need to be updated. **<u>However the Council does not have an IT policy in place and on this basis, it has not met the requirements of Assertion 10.</u>**	
P. Trust funds – the council met its responsibilities as a trustee	**Not applicable**
Shinfield Parish Council is not a trustee of any trust funds	