Internal Audit Report 2025/26

East Halton Parish Council

Findings & Recommendations

The Council has made a huge move in the right direction with regards to Governance and Transparency, especially with regard to year end financial reporting.

Based on my internal audit this year I would recommend the Council looks at the following areas:

- The Council have reviewed policies this year but the website need updating to reflect this, for example Standing Orders are from 2023 and there are 2 version of the Financial Regulation published.
- Payments are approved at Council, but little detail is put in the minutes as to what is approved, this is good practice for transparency
- Councillors details on the NLC website does not match the Council's website and as such not all Council Register of Interests, this should be resolved as soon as possible.
- The Council website does not meet the requirement to meet Assertion 10 of the AGAR, the statement on the website says *"we cannot guarantee that it meets the WCAG 2.1 Level AA requirements*", which is the lower level. Council should look to get the correct standard.

  Website accessibility — the council website must meet WCAG 2.2 AA standards (a legal requirement for public sector bodies under the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018)

Andy Hopkins PSLCC PIALC

Internal Auditor

May 2026

East Halton Parish Council

Annual Governance and Accountability Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Item	Check	Notes/Findings
Minutes and Agendas	That they are kept correctly, numbered, initialled and signed by Chairman etc. as well as Committee meetings and that meetings are called lawfully.	Agendas and Minutes are published on the website Minutes are signed off at the following meeting.
Purchase Invoices	Kept and VAT invoices where appropriate and marked with cheque numbers for reference.	Invoices are prepared each month for the Council to approve.
VAT	Where applicable correctly recorded and reclaimed for previous year.	VAT was reclaimed this year. VAT was separately on the Finance Spreadsheet.
Sales Invoices	Produced timely and correctly and supported by appropriate paperwork such as diaries/emails etc.	Correct
Credit Control/Debts	That any sales invoices are credit controlled and payments chased.	Correct
Receipts and Payments	That payments are made properly by cheque/BACS/DD/SO and properly recorded and that receipts are also made properly and properly recorded and supported by paperwork trail.	A payment schedule is produced for each meeting and signed off. Payments for the cemetery are received and reported.

Staffing/Personnel	That staff have appropriate contracts and procedures are in place for personnel management.	The Clerk had a written statement of particulars, and a review of the Clerks salary was reviewed this year.
Payroll	That appropriate payroll system is in place and supporting information for pay rates/salary levels etc.	Payroll system in place for payroll and pension payments. Payroll is authorised as part of the Payment Schedule and includes expenses and HMRC PAYE, NI and Pension (through Nest) payments.
Governance	That Standing Orders/Finance Regs/Insurance and all other policy documents are in place and that they are reviewed at least annually.	The Council correctly declared an exemption for 2025/26 as under 25k. The Asset Register was updated in Nov 2025. Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were reviewed and need updating on the website. The AGAR was published. The Exemption Certificate was published. The Exercise of Public Rights was published. The Internal Audit report was published.
Transparency		Payments are approved at Council, but no details are put in the minutes, again good practice for transparency The budget is published. The NLC website needs updating an Declarations of Interest published.
Cash handling	That all cash handled is subject to audit/security	No petty cash.

	trail and this is adhered to.	
Budgets and Monitoring	That a budget is in place and adhered to, with monitoring.	The budget and precept were agreed at the Dec 25 meeting. The budget is now on the website.
Accounting/Finance	That at least quarterly account reconciliations are in place and presented to Council.	Bank reconciliations are regularly presented to Council.
Accountability	That Councillors sign cheque book stubs, initial and sign finance information presented and are presented with information to allow accountability.	There is an Internal Control Document.
Audit	That internal audit is carried out with report presented to Council and that external audit paperwork is correctly completed and presented to Council and followed up with any appropriate actions.	The Internal Audit was discussed at Council and matters raised have been addressed.
Precept and grants	That precept level is officially set and communicated to local authority and correctly received.	The precept was agreed by Council in Dec 25 and sent to NLC.
Section 137	That it is separately recorded, and cap adhered to.	S137 spend is clearly marked.
Assertion 10		The Council has a .gov.uk email account and website, however the Website accessibility standard does not meet the legal requirement

		The Council has a Data Protection and Document Retention policy. The Council has adopted an IT Policy