|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Northants CALC** | **IAS** |

 **Internal Audit Report**

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of council: | Middleton Cheney Parish Council |
| Name of Internal Auditor: | John Marshall | Date of report: | 22.04.2024 |
| Year ending: | 31 March 2024 | Date audit carried out: | 22.04.2024 |

*Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council’s internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council’s control. It is important to note that managing the council’s internal controls is a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and councillors and it would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of the council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to and seen by me.* ***The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.***

**To the Chairman of the Council:**

I met with Pip Davis, Clerk & RFO on 22 April to conduct the year-end internal audit that by mutual agreement was conducted via email and an online meeting platform. I would thank Pip for her assistance in carrying out the audit.

Prior to our meeting, I examined the publicly available information displayed on the council’s website including the council’s policies, procedures, agendas, minutes, financial and other records. I sought evidence that the previous year’s Internal and External Audit reports had been properly reported to and where necessary acted upon by the Council; they had. I then examined the council’s arrangements for the management and control of its business in the areas of bookkeeping, due process (ie compliance with the ‘proper practices’ as set out in the Practitioners’ Guide\*), risk management, budget setting and monitoring, payroll, asset register, bank reconciliations, internal control and year-end procedures including the display of information and the exercise of public rights.

Where necessary, I requested and was provided with supplementary evidence to enable me to reach a conclusion regarding the enquiries I am required to make as set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) that forms part of the council’s Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). This supplementary information was obtained through inspection of documents and questioning at the audit meeting.

I noted just one audit item. Whilst the precept is displayed on the website, the council’s approved budget is not; the statement that “*Further details of the Parish Council's budgets for the Financial Year can be obtained from the Parish Clerk”* that historically, has been present for many years is not appropriate.

Notwithstanding that single observation, there has been a significant improvement in the council’s performance over the last 12 months. Based on the information made available to me, I am satisfied that in all significant respects, the internal control objectives are being delivered and achieved to a standard adequate to meet the council’s needs. As a consequence, I am pleased to be able to report that I have answered ‘yes’ to all relevant questions in the AIAR. This is greatly to the credit of the council’s dedicated members supported by their competent and diligent Clerk.

John Marshall, CiLCA

Internal Auditor to the Council

07505 139832
wjm.marshall1@gmail.com

The figures submitted in the Annual Return are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Year ending31 March 2023** | **Year ending31 March 2023** |
| 1. Balances brought forward
 | 353,113 | 332,581 |
| 1. Annual precept
 | 136,680 | 133,728 |
| 1. Total other receipts
 | 24,846 | 73,985 |
| 1. Staff costs
 | 38,007 | 52,708 |
| 1. Loan interest/capital repayments
 | 0 | 0 |
| 1. Total other payments
 | 144,051 | 99,458 |
| 1. Balances carried forward
 | 332,581 | 388,128 |
| 1. Total cash and investments
 | 332,581 | 388,128 |
| 1. Total fixed assets and long term assets
 | 455,311 | 456,713 |
| 1. Total borrowings
 | 0 | 0 |

\*The ‘proper practices’ referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 are set out in the current version of the *Practitioners’ Guide* available for free download from this page:

https://www.pkf-littlejohn.com/services-limited-assurance-regime-useful-documents-and-links