

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL – October 2023 (quarter 2)

INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 aims to strengthen governance and accountability through requirements related to internal control and internal audit.

Whilst Sudbury Town Council has reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit (independence, competence, proportionate and scope), it has a requirement levied on it to ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control: -

‘The regulations require active participation by members in providing positive assurance to the electors of their stewardship of public money. The framework of accountability is risk-based i.e. level of control and management must be appropriate to the risk involved. The Council must determine the most appropriate method of internal control... care should be taken to ensure that internal control tests are proportionate and relevant and that they are neither seen as, nor intended as, undue interference in the RFO’s day to day management of financial affairs.’

As part of its internal control, the Town Council has appointed a non-signatory Councillor to conduct a review of the system of internal control via the following tests on a quarterly basis with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council and minuted as received.

CONTROL TEST	TEST DONE	COMMENTS – check documents and initial
	Yes or No	
Ensuring an up to date Register of Assets	No	The Asset Register is currently being reviewed and updated and is due to be added on to Rialtas.
Regular maintenance arrangement for physical assets	No	Needs to be reviewed once the Asset Register have been entered on Rialtas.
Annual review of risk and the adequacy of Insurance cover	Yes	General insurance reviewed and renewed 1/4/2023.
Annual review of financial risk	Yes	Risk Management Policy reviewed and adopted March 2023.
Awareness of Standing Orders and Financial regulations	Yes	Financial Regulations are currently under review together with a NALC review of their Model Financial Regulations. Financial Regulations email sent my RFO to staff 10/10/2023.

Adoption of Financial and Standing Orders	Yes	Last adopted Nov 2023. Updated Financial Regulations will be adopted when completed. (as above)
Regular reporting on performance by contractors	No	Needs to be reviewed. Managers need to be made aware of their responsibility when authorising invoices for payment. This assumes that a contractor has completed the work to a satisfactory standard. RFO sent email reminder to 10/10/2023.
Annual review of contracts (where appropriate)	Yes	Contracts register reviewed and by the RFO Sept 2023.
Contracts of employment for staff	Yes	Two members of staff have started since the last RFO review - both had signed contracts in place – Checked 11/10/2023.
Contract annually reviewed	No	Needs review.
Updating records to record changes in relevant legislation	Yes	Town Clerk regularly attends HR seminars and changes records accordingly.
PAYE/NIC properly operated by the Council as an employer	N/A	Operated by SGW on behalf of STC.
Regular financial reporting to Town Council	Yes	Monthly reporting by RFO to Finance Committee.
Regular budget monitoring statements as reported to Town Council	Yes	Quarterly budget reporting by RFO to the Finance Committee.
Compliance with DCLG Guide <i>Open & Accountable Local Government 2014</i> , Part 4: Officer Decision Reports	Yes	All decisions are recorded through the minutes which are available online. Minutes are checked for authority to spend by the DFO prior to the payment.
Compliance with Local Transparency Code Of 2014: Items of expenditure incurred over £500	Yes	Approved and recorded email confirmation sent to RFO. Minutes are checked by the DFO prior to payment.

Verifying that the Council is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements Are the following in place:		The whole GDPR and FOI procedures need reviewing and redrafting and submitted for approval at the Policy Committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit / Impact Assessment 	No	Last reviewed in 2021 - needs review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy Notices 	Yes	Last review 2018 - Needs review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests 	No	Needs review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for dealing with Data breaches 	No	Needs review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Retention & Disposal Policies 	Yes	Last reviewed in 2018 – needs review.
Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept in for safekeeping	Yes	Checked by RFO 11/10/2023.
Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' Interests and Gifts of Hospitality	Yes	Checked by RFO 101/10/2023 - 3 Councillors forms were missing from the website and 1 form was not signed.
Adoption of Codes of Conduct for Members	Yes	Suffolk Code of Conduct adopted May 2023.
Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Yes	Checked by RFO 11/08/2023 all 14 Councillors and the Mayor and Deputy declarations received May 2023.

Date of review of system of Internal Controls.....

Review of system of Internal Controls carried out by:

Name.....Signature.....

Report submitted to Council (date).....

(minute reference)

Next review of system of Internal Controls due.....

Additional comments by reviewer: