

Redmire Parish Council

Statement on Internal Control

For the Year Ending 31st March 2025

1. Scope of Responsibility

Redmire Parish Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its operations comply with legal requirements and proper standards. It is committed to safeguarding public funds, ensuring they are properly accounted for, and used efficiently and effectively. To achieve this, the Council maintains a sound system of internal control that supports its functions and includes measures for risk management.

2. Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The internal control system is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risks entirely. While it provides reasonable assurance of effectiveness, it cannot guarantee absolute protection against failure in achieving policies, aims, and objectives. This ongoing process helps the Council identify and prioritize risks, evaluate their likelihood and impact, and manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

3. The Internal Control Environment

The Council

The Council appoints a Chairman to oversee meetings and ensure that all Council decisions are lawful. Each year, typically in November or December, the Council reviews its obligations, sets objectives, approves the budget, and determines the precept for the next financial year. The Council monitors financial systems, procedures, and budgetary control throughout the year, with regular reviews documented in meeting minutes. Council meetings take place approximately ten times annually, ensuring continuous oversight of its goals and financial standing.

The Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer

The Council employs a Clerk who acts as its advisor and administrator. The Clerk is also the **Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)** and manages the Council's finances. Duties include ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, managing risks, and maintaining adherence to the Council's procedures, policies, and internal control systems.

Payments

Payments are made in accordance with the Council's **Financial Regulations**. All financial transactions require Council approval, ensuring transparency and accountability. Every

payment is scrutinized, with strict authorisation procedures in place. Three Members of the Council must approve each cheque, and two Councillors must sign both the cheque and the corresponding cheque stub.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management

The Council conducts regular risk assessments to identify potential threats and ensure systems and controls are effective. These assessments are reviewed periodically to strengthen financial security and governance.

Internal Audit

The Council appoints an **Independent Internal Auditor** to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of its financial records, procedures, internal control systems, risk management, and regulatory compliance. The effectiveness of the internal audit process is reviewed annually to ensure continued integrity in Council operations.

External Audit

The Council's External Auditors, **PKF Littlejohn**, conduct an independent review of the Council's accounts. An annual **Certificate of Audit** is issued upon satisfactory verification of the Council's financial records.

4. Review of Effectiveness

The Council is responsible for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of its internal control system. This review is informed by multiple sources, including:

- **The Full Council**, overseeing governance and financial management.
- **The Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer**, who maintains the internal control environment and ensures risk management.
- **The Independent Internal Auditor**, who evaluates internal procedures and compliance.
- **PKF Littlejohn**, the Council's external auditors, who finalize their review through the annual return, signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Chairman, and the Internal Auditor.

5. Significant Internal Control Issues

No significant internal control issues were identified during the **2023/24 financial year**. However, the Council remains committed to continuous improvement of its internal control framework, addressing any minor concerns highlighted during the review process