

**Internal Audit Checklist 2025/26**

Name of Parish or Town Council	Colsterworth and District Parish Council		
Parish Council website	https://colsterworth.parish.lincolnshire@gov.uk		
Name of internal auditor	Cathryn Nicoll		
Date of audit	21 November 2025		
Type of audit	Intermediate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Year-end (including AGAR)
Council contact information	Name	Email	
Clerk	Sue Grant (new clerk from 1 January 2026 Eleanor Parfitt)	clerk@colsterworthanddistpc.co.uk	
RFO* if different			
Chairman*	Ellis O'Neill	ellis.oneill@colsterworthanddistpc.co.uk	
Electorate	1665	Total number of seats	15
Quorum	5	Number of seats filled at time of audit	11
Precept Demand 2025/26	£43,558	Gross budgeted Income	£58,476 inc Precept
Date of most recent audit	15 April 2025 (final)	Gross budgeted Expenditure	£58,476
	Tested?	Comments	
Has the internal auditor seen previous internal and external audit reports including the most recent? What were the main recommendations?	Y	Yes, audit carried out by myself. Only minor recommendations made and acted upon.	
Were the auditor reports and actions implemented? Have the actions appeared in the minutes? (SAPPP The Practitioners Guide para 5.99)	Y/N	Date minuted and minute reference(s) AGAR Internal Audit Report - Minute No. 2025.17.7 - Final Internal audit report presented to council and accepted, minute number 2025.37.1. Intermediate Internal Audit Report accepted by Council - minute 2024.145.	

Key governance review		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk ⁱ		
				Low	Med	High
1	Standing Orders* <i>(up to date 2025 version, tailored, reviewed and lawful)</i>	Y		X		
2	Financial Regulations* <i>(up to date 2025 version, tailored, reviewed and lawful)</i>	Y		X		
3	Terms of reference (committees / working groups) <i>(should contain - clear days' notice, quorum, delegated power or advisory, lawful, no individual councillors making decisions.)</i>	Y	TOR in place for Finance Committee and Planning committee 2024.164.5			
4	Councillors' Code of Conduct* <i>(s.27 Localism Act 2011)</i>	Y	Councillors to sign to confirm acceptance.	X		
5	Complaints procedure* (tailored and reviewed)	Y		X		
6	General Power of Competence <i>(decision compliant with S.1-8 Localism Act 2011 and 'The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012').</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Date and minute reference GPOC adopted</i> • <i>Qualified Clerk (CiLCA 2015 or later or Level 4 Community Governance or higher qualifications seen)</i> • <i>Two-thirds elected councillors at the time of adoption during the current cycle.</i> 	Y	No CiLCA qualified clerk.	X		
7	Arrangement for inspection of public records adequate* <i>(Announcement at least one day after parish council approval, announcement at least one day ahead of inspection period, minuted approval by council of inspection period dates - 30 working days including first 10 working days of July).</i>	Y		X		
8	External audit report published by 30 Sept on the council website <i>(not applicable to councils validly certified as 'Exempt').*</i> <i>(TPG para 5.81- 5.84 also see guidance notes on front of applicable AGAR form)</i>	Y		X		

Transparency		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
9	End of year accounts published by 1 July*	Y		X		
10	Annual Governance statement published by 1 July* Correctly claimed exemption from audit (if relevant)		Not applicable			
11	Documents listed on front page of AGAR form published as specified.	Y		X		
12	Agendas and meeting papers published with three clear days' notice for parish/ town council meetings*	Y		X		
13	Past 5 years of annual returns available online*	Y	Anything older than five years can be archived.	X		
14	Asset register published by 1 July*	Y	Shown under SCRIBE reports.	X		
ICO Model Publication Scheme expected requirements:						
15	All items of expenditure above £100 published by 1 July (over £500 for larger Councils)	Y		X		
16	Councillor responsibilities published by 1 July	Y	No responsibilities other than Finance and Planning committees.	X		
17	Draft minutes published within one month of the meeting	Y		X		
Councils over £200K turnover:						
18	Senior officer salaries published*					
19	Data on issues important to local people (eg.subsidised trade union activity, projects, parking, grants)*					
20	Contract/ procurement information over £5,000 published*					

Accounting		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
21	Cashbook or the accounting system maintained and up to date					
22	Arithmetically correct (checks / balance)					
23	Evidence of internal control (<i>compliant with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and TPG 1.14-1.21</i>)					
24	VAT* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence of recording evidence of reclaiming 					
25	All payments supported by authorised, minuted decisions and invoices					
26	s.137* (<i>last resort power for non-GPC councils</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded separately within accounts Within legal threshold limits for the current year Spend in accordance with legislation 					
27	Payments made in accordance with Financial Regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheques Online banking BACS Direct Debit Standing Orders Credit or debit cards Other payments 					
28	If Investments/ funds/ cash/ total over £100,000 an Investment Strategy MUST have been adopted and ensure long-term investments for 12+ months are recorded in the Asset and Long-term Investment Register and the purchase/investment and receipts/sales are accounted for as set out in the TPG. (<i>TPG 2.26-2.29, Section 4 Item H & 5.17, 5.29-30, 5.174-5.177, 5.185-5.190</i>). An Investment Strategy is recommended for sums held below £100,000					

Budget		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
29	Annual budget income and expenditure amounts in support of precept approved by full council and minuted* (TPG 1.8, Section 4 Table D, 5.25-5.28)	Y		X		
30	Precept amount properly minuted by full council* (TPG Section 4 Table item D)	Y		X		
31	General and earmarked reserves reviewed and sufficient (TPG 1.13, 2.10-11, 4.21 Table D, 5.31-5.39, 5.208)	Y	Minute number November 2025.115.1	X		
32	Budget is monitored regularly with variances reported to council in line with Financial Regulations. Variances from budget are explained.	Y		X		

Income control		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
33	Income properly recorded and banked promptly					
34	Precept income received in bank account.					
35	Scale of fees reviewed regularly, and fees and charges accurately applied.					
36	Aged debt analysis maintained and appropriate recovery procedures in place to recover arrears/ debts (TPG 5.46-5.48)					
37	VAT applied accurately to transactions and accounted for. (TPG Section 4 Table Item E)					
38	Effective security of cash and receiving cash from transactions					
39	Effective security of card receipts transactions					

Bank reconciliation		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
40	Regular bank balances minuted and bank statement reconciliation and signed off by members and minuted. (TPG 1.10, 2.25)	Y	Viewed	X		
41	Balancing entries (adjustments) explained		n/a			
42	Bank mandate up-to-date -Evidence of signatories being reviewed and minuted -Sufficient signatories to enable banking business to be continuously available without delays. (TPG 1.15.5)	Y	Viewed on website.	X		

Petty cash		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
43	Petty cash account used/authorised					
44	Petty cash spending supported by VAT receipt(s)					
45	Petty cash reported to Council					
46	Petty cash float reconciled/reimbursed					

Asset control		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
47	Register of assets and long-term investments* • Exists • Up to date and complete • Published • Review (at least annually) has been minuted (TPG Section 4 Table item H, 5.57-5.70)	Y	Published on website - see SCRIBE reports.	X		
48	Any loans to organisations, groups and other parties accurately recorded in the register.	Y	No loans	X		
49	Land and property registered with HM Land Registry. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/registering-local-authority-land-and-property-with-hm-land-registry/register-local-authority-land-and-property	Y	Colsterway play area / cemetery	X		
50	Any loans/borrowing has been properly obtained with authority from Debt Management Office and accurately accounted for (TPG Section 4 Table item H, 5.70)	Y	None			

Risk management		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
51	Risk Register / Management scheme in place and reviewed annually and minuted (TPG 1.31-1.33, Section 4 Table Item C)					
52	Insurance Cover <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed annually for levels of cover Certificate(s) viewed & valid Employees' Liability Cover in place and published* Public Liability Cover Employees' Fidelity Guarantee Councillors' ages reviewed and recorded (some policies restrict some or all cover over certain ages) Other e.g. vehicles, assets, equipment, volunteers ... Compare schedule against asset register and ensure adequate insurance is in place for items to be covered. Public liability insurance must match the PLI for any delegated services, assets (£10million) Any insurance claims during the previous 12 months which may affect the policy and valuations and cover and has the Risk Register been updated to mitigate the risk of re-occurrence? (TPG Section 4 Table Item C)					
53	Internal Controls outlined in Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are being followed and effective? (TPG Section 4 Table Item C)					
54	Assets inspected and Health & Safety issues considered* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play equipment Street furniture Fire safety Defibrillators Other 					
55	Grants ratified and minuted according to policy					
56	Health and Safety Policy in place where there are 5+ persons working (count councillors, officers, contractors, volunteers) (S 3, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and HSE)					
57	Evidence of unusual activity from minutes					
58	Back up of files adequate					
59	Storage of files (paper and electronic) adequate					

General		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
60	Local Council Award Scheme applicable? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation Quality Quality Gold Would this Council be a suitable candidate if they have not achieved the Award Scheme before now?	Y	To be investigated for the future.	X		

Proper Process / Practice		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
61	List of Members' interests* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> displayed on council website /link to District Council reviewed regularly (<i>Members have a statutory requirement to complete and report changes within 28 days of change</i>) Interests declared in meetings and members follow Standing Orders and Code of Conduct Dispensations approved as set out in Standing Orders and minuted. 	Y		X		
62	Declarations of Acceptance of Office* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor (after election/ co-option) Chair (at least annually) 	Y	Viewed	X		
63	Co-options (after eligibility and disqualification checks) approved by council by a vote, minuted and according to policy	Y		X		
64	Agenda documents lawful and published*	Y		X		
65	Minutes lawful and published/ hard copy signed* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Apologies noted or resolved to be accepted?</i> <i>A member absent for 6 months handled correctly?</i> <i>Minutes sequential?</i> <i>Members present and not present recorded</i> <i>Interests correctly minuted and members leave room in accordance with Code of Conduct and Standing Orders (Ss27-33 Localism Act 2011)</i> <i>Dispensations applied for and granted in accordance with Standing Orders (S.33 Localism Act 2011)</i> <i>Resolutions are minuted and stated with clarity and the applicable legal power included.</i> 	Y		X		
66	Confidential items correctly used and resolutions minuted and published <i>Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S.1(2)</i>	Y		X		

67	Purchase order system used/correct	Y	Used for village magazine PO	X		
68	Purchasing authorised in line with Financial Regulations / Standing Orders limits and the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024 requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice of procurement method correct for the procurement - For £30,000+(inc VAT) contracts published on 'Find a Tender' - For £5,000 - £29,999 recommended to publish on 'Find a Tender' - Contract decisions issued and published - 30-day payment terms apply to all contracts - Publish 6-monthly performance to pay within 30-days 	Y		X		
69	Delegation to officers or committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawful delegation (to an officer, committee or joint committee but an individual councillor does not have decision-making powers – S.101 Local Government Act 1972) • Limits set out in financial regulations and / or standing orders or policies or schemes of delegation; • adhered to; • reported adequately 	Y		X		
70	Annual publication of Members Allowances, Subsistence and Travel expenses paid in the financial year within 14 days of 31 st March where practicable. (Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 regulation 31)	Y	None paid	X		
71	Any Members' Basic Allowances are paid in accordance with the District/Borough Council - approved rates for that Parish/ Town Council and the HMRC PAYE rules applied to Members Allowances before payment. Any subsistence and travel allowances paid are in accordance with the Parish/Town Council's own adopted policies.	Y	Chair's allowance is budgeted but not taken.	X		

Payroll & HR		Tested?	Comments & recommendations				Risk		
							Low	Med	High
72	Employee posts properly approved/ recorded/ correct job descriptions in place for each post holder and amendments are confirmed by letter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper Officer (Clerk) • RFO • Deputy Clerk • Admin assistant • Site staff/ Grounds workers • Other 								
73	Public sector IR35 rules applied where applicable https://www.gov.uk/guidance/off-payroll-working-for-clients								
74	Right to work checks for employees completed and on file https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work								
75	Written statement of particulars for all staff from day one (April 2020 onwards) https://www.gov.uk/employment-contracts-and-conditions/written-statement-of-employment-particulars and amendments to contracts confirmed in writing and minuted*								
76	Proper procedures for payroll, PAYE & NI registered with HMRC and monthly reporting of RTI and Pensions*								
77	Is payroll inhouse or external provider used?		In-house		External				
78	PAYE & NI payments spot checked - calculations								
79	Employers Allowance – Councils are not eligible – payroll system checked.								
80	Approval of salaries, annual inflationary increases and increments minuted								
81	Approval of expense claims								
82	Minimum wage threshold met								
83	HR procedures and policies adopted / reviewed								
84	Training policy and record staff /elected Members								

85	Probation review completed for new staff within probation period.									
86	Annual appraisals undertaken									
87	Job description up to date / reviewed									
88	Health and safety of staff workstation & PC equipment undertaken * <ul style="list-style-type: none">Display Screen Equipment									
89	Registered with The Pensions Regulator* Reference number Date of (Re)Declaration of Compliance (every 3 years)									
90	Adequate Pension provision in place to meet statutory requirements https://www.gov.uk/employers-workplace-pensions-rules		LGPS			Tick				
			NEST			Tick				
			Other			Identify				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Automatic Enrolment for Staff*		Y		N		DD/MM/YYYY			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Opt-Out Evidenced*		Y		N		DD/MM/YYYY			

Information and data compliance		Tested?	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
91	Registered with Information Commissioner's Office (if relevant)	Y	Expires October 2026	X		
92	Council-owned email address account in place (either .gov.uk or .org.uk format) (TPG 1.47)	Y	To investigate further.		X	
93	Website Accessibility Statement reviewed and published online* https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps	Y		X		
94	GDPR/ Data Protection Act policies and procedures in place* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record Retention Schedule Data Breach Assessment Privacy Policy Process for dealing with a Subject Access Request Security Compliance Checklist 	Y		X		

95	Publication scheme (ICO model template adopted) <i>(up to date, tailored, reviewed and lawful)</i> and published on the council website.* (Modifications from the ICO template must have had ICO approval.) (Ss19-20 FOIA 2000) Has the Council complied with publishing the information specified in its Publication scheme?	Y				
96	Compliant with the relevant Transparency Code (if applicable)?					
97	IT Policy adopted	Y		X		

Transaction spot check (Sample test transactions such as largest payment, employee salaries, direct debit, S.137, VAT, Councillors payment, etc)

Check number	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ledger date						
Item / budget heading	Play equipment painting	Village Magazine printing	PAYE			
Reference / Cheque number	BACS 07.05.2025	BACS 05.06.2025	BACS 08.07.2025			
Was purchase approved prior to ordering? Order minute reference	2024.14	2025.41 Ongoing	HMRC ongoing			
Any evidence the purchase was delivered? Delivery evidence						
When was the payment approved? Payment minute reference	2025.21	2025.41	2025.61			
Is the bill the same as ordered? Invoice value	£200.00 £810.00	£417.60	PAYE staff			
Is the payment approval minuted? Minute value	£1010.00 2025.21	£417.60 2025.41	£602.02 2025.61			
Is the payment approved matching? Payment value	Y	£417.60	£602.02			
Does the bank statement value match amount approved? Statement value	Y	Y	Y			
Is it within 30 days? Timely payment	Y	Y	Y			
Has the VAT been recorded accurately in the accounts? VAT recorded	No VAT	inc VAT £69.60	No Vat			
Has a lawful power been identified? S137 recorded in ledger	n/a	n/a	n/a			
Notes/ recommendations						

Year End Process		Y/N	Comments & recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
98	Accounting method correctly applied <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income and expenditure – <i>mandatory over £200k for 3 years</i> Receipts and payments 					
99	Bank statement opening and closing balances reconcile to cash book / ledger.					
100	Robust audit trail evident					
101	Debtors and Creditors recorded (I&E accounting method only)					
102	Asset register updated for current and previous year balances					
103	Borrowing – ensure appropriate DMO approval in place and full year accounting is accurate and checked against balance at 31 st March on DMO website. <i>(TPG5.70)</i> <i>Arrangement fees are treated as administrative expenses in year of receipt.</i>					
104	Lending <i>-check if any lending has taken place and is accounted for as specified in TPG.</i>					
105	Explanation of Variances completed in sufficient detail					
106	Intermediate audit recommendations implemented					
107	Annual Accounting Statement rounding applied/adds up					
108	Trust Funds – ensure account filing responsibilities are up to date and not included in AGAR figures					
109	Previous year 'Restatements' correctly identified					
110	Auditor's recommendations for completion of the Annual Governance Statement <i>(if applicable)</i> and narrative report needed to explain IA Annual Statement's 'No' entries.					

Appendix: Additional Areas for Audit (Council Specific)

	Allotments	Tested?	Comments & Recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
A1	Income for allotment rentals balance					
A2	Fees charged in accordance with approved rates					
A3	Up to date occupancy details kept and securely retained					
A4	Agreements/licences issued to all plot holders					
A5	Other					

	Burials	Tested?	Comments & Recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
B1	Cemetery accounts balance					
B2	Fees charged in accordance with approved rates					
B3	All interred ashes have certificates of cremation*					
B4	Permits properly documented and stored*					
B5	Cemetery regulations adopted and up to date					
B6	Registers of burials and purchased graves completed correctly and stored safely*					
B7	Burial certificates issued correctly					
B8	Green slips returned appropriately to Registrar					
B9	Legible cemetery burial plan up to date* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> backed up if appropriate 					
B10	Business rates exemptions correctly applied					

	Charities	Tested?	Comments & Recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
C1	Accounted for separately					
C2	Independently audited*					
C3	Returns filed within legal time limits*					

	Buildings and premises	Tested?	Comments & Recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
Note	Premises licence. Fire checks, electrical checks, First Aid, Insurance valuations, PRS, Water checks, Fire alarms, COSHH, gas inspections, Employer liability and PLI, Fidelity. DEC certificate Use HSE checklist or similar https://www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/work-types/village-and-community-halls.htm					

	<i>Is the ownership /lease title registered with Land Registry?</i>					
Cb1						
Cb2						
Cb3						

	Markets	Tested?	Comments & Recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
M1	Income for stall hire balances					
M2	Fees charged in accordance with approved rates					
M3	Up to date occupancy details kept and securely retained					
M4	Statutory records kept / stored safely					
M5	Agreements/licences issued to all stall holders					
M6	Other					

	Other	Tested?	Comments & Recommendations	Risk		
				Low	Med	High
O1						
O2						
O3						

Endnotes

High and medium risk items may lead to the internal auditor stating that the Council does not comply with one or more assertions on the AGAR form at the end of the financial year.

¹ **High risk** – these items should be dealt with as a **high priority** because they may affect one or more of the following – statutory and must be done, high financial risk which could reveal the council to losses, not compliant with Proper Practices in the Practitioners’ Guide, high risk of reputational damage, failure to comply may lead to penalties, prosecution or legal action.

Medium risk – these items need to be improved to meet one or more of the following - statutory requirements, support internal control, reduce the risk of financial loss and reputational damage, improve governance, improve compliance with proper practices in the Practitioners’ Guide, and to improve procedures that should be in place.

Low risk – these items are usually **best practice** to improve governance, internal control, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness.

*-Asterisked items are statutory requirements and should be in place where applicable.